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ABSTRACT

This manual is for educators, parents, and policymakers who wish to evaluate the responsiveness of middle schools to the developmental needs of twelve to fourteen-year-old students (young adolescents). A leader's manual and a slide-tape presentation complete the training needed to use this Middle Grades Assessment Program. A preliminary discussion offers an insight into the needs of these young adolescents and their social, emotional, and physical development. A discussion is also presented of the essential characteristics of schools that are responsive to the needs of this age group. A checklist that contains guidelines for effective observation and assessment of schools by lay people is introduced. This checklist evaluates how well the school is meeting adolescent needs for: safety, academic effectiveness, diversity, self-exploration, participation, social interaction, physical activity, competence and achievement, and structure and limits. Forms for conducting interviews, which are part of the assessment program, are included for meetings with school principals, guidance counselors, teachers, parents, and students. These forms contain statements of desirable conditions and supplies questions to ascertain if this condition exists in the school. Observation forms are provided for evaluating school facilities, classroom instruction, the media center or library, student rules and expectations, and the general environment. A chart is included for summarizing observations. The manual concludes with a glossary of educational terms, bibliographies on learning environments and young adolescents, and lists of journals and organizations concerned with education and adolescents. (JD)

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# MIDDLE GRADES ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

## User's Manual

Gayle Dorman

Center for Early Adolescence

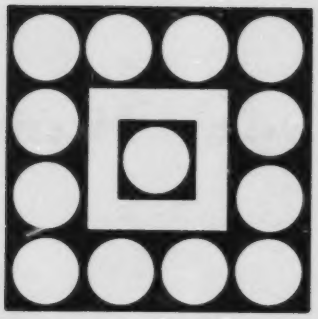
SP 019 519

# MIDDLE GRADES ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

## User's Manual

**Gayle Dorman**

**Note to User:** This manual and the checklist included herein are intended to be used with the accompanying *Leader's Manual* and slide-tape presentation. Users are urged to complete the entire *Middle Grades Assessment Program*, which includes the training sessions outlined in the *Leader's Manual*.



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Center for Early Adolescence
Maternal & Child Health, School of Public Health
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Suite 223, Carr Mill Mall
Carrboro, North Carolina 27510

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# Table of Contents

**Foreword** ..... iii

**Chapter 1: Introduction** ..... 1

A. Why a *Middle Grades Assessment Program*?

B. What Are the Developmental Needs of Young Adolescents?

C. Schools for Young Adolescents: The Philosophy of the Center for Early Adolescence

D. Using the *Program*

**Chapter 2: Early Adolescent Development** (co-authored by Joan Lipsitz) ..... 3

A. Physical Development

B. Social and Emotional Development

C. Intellectual Development

D. Secondary Changes

E. Needs of Young Adolescents for Healthy Development

**Chapter 3: Responsive Schools** ..... 9

A. The Essential Characteristics

B. Effective Schools Literature

C. School Responsiveness to Developmental Needs

**Chapter 4: The Checklist** ..... 15

A. Intended Uses

B. Guidelines for Use
   1. Guidelines for Visiting Schools
   2. Interviewing Skills
   3. Listening Skills
   4. Observation Skills

C. Checklist Items and Instructions for Use
   1. Instructions for Using the Checklist
   2. Interview Forms
   3. Observation Forms
   4. Summarizing Sheets

**Chapter 5: Glossary** (co-authored by Wayne Dillon) ..... 61

**Chapter 6: Bibliography and Resources** ..... 63

A. Learning Environments
   1. Schooling for Young Adolescents
   2. Effective Schools Studies
   3. Curriculum and Instruction
   4. Design and Use of Physical Space
   5. Youth Participation

B. Early Adolescence

C. Journals

D. Organizations

# Foreword

The Center for Early Adolescence has been concerned about schooling for young adolescents since its beginning in 1978. Staff members have written articles for publication, testified before Congress, delivered speeches, served on study groups and commissions, and conducted workshops on various aspects of middle grade schooling. As the Center became recognized as a national advocate and information resource, parents, policymakers, and citizens began to ask for help in making decisions about schooling for young adolescents. Hence, the idea of an assessment checklist based on the developmental needs of young adolescents was born. The idea was discussed with leaders in education, educational policy, and citizen involvement.

The Needmor Fund recognized the importance of the checklist project in 1980 and generously underwrote the Center for Early Adolescence's development of the *Middle Grades Assessment Program.*

The *Program* consists of this *User's Manual,* a *Leader's Manual,* and the accompanying slide-tape presentation. The *User's Manual* includes a Checklist of observation items and interview questions that relate the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social needs of young adolescents to the school environment. It offers a way to look at schools in terms of what we know that young adolescents need for healthy growth and provides a bibliography and resource list for further reading about schools and adolescent development. The *Leader's Manual* offers techniques for training people in the use of the Checklist. The slide presentation with an accompanying audio tape presents illustrations of school scenes to sharpen the Checklist user's observational skills.

Parents, educators, policymakers, and community organizations can use the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* to determine if their schools encourage young adolescents to learn and mature in a secure, responsive environment and then to engage in joint discussion and decision making about their schools.

# Acknowledgements

The *Middle Grades Assessment Program* was researched, written, and field tested by Gayle Dorman, Director of Training at the Center for Early Adolescence, with the assistance of Center staff. Several individuals and groups have made significant contributions to the *Program*. They include:

Hayes Mizell, Director of the Southeastern Public Education Program, who introduced the idea of a school observation and assessment tool based on the developmental needs of young adolescents.

Joan Lipsitz, who in addition to co-authoring the chapter on early adolescent development, provided leadership and encouragement throughout the development of the *Program*.

Wayne Dillon, who co-authored the Glossary.

Leah Lefstein, who edited the manuscript, improving the clarity of the text as well as contributing her ideas as a former teacher and a mother of three teenagers.

Suzanne Rucker, who patiently and efficiently supervised the typing of several hundred pages of drafts.

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Roger Burbage
North Carolina Leadership Institute for Principals

Wayne Dillon
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Jeremiah Floyd
National School Boards Association

Frances Hooks
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

Susan Kaeser
Citizens' Council for Ohio Schools

Vernon Malone
Wake County (NC) School Board

Carl Marburger
National Committee for Citizens in Education

Sally Mitchell
National Parent Teacher Association

Joy Sovde
Education Finance Review Committee
South Carolina General Assembly

Groups of parents, educators, school board members, and citizens reviewed the *User's Manual*, participated in a training session, actually used the Checklist to observe schools, and evaluated the *User's Manual* and the slide-tape presentation. The comments and criticisms of these groups served as the basis for final modifications, which greatly strengthened the *Program*. Groups participating in this field testing were:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
Charlotte, NC

High Point Schools
High Point, NC

Marietta Junior High School
Marietta, OH

Margaret Spellacy Junior High School
Cleveland, OH

W.A. Perry Middle School
Columbia, SC

The following readers critiqued the *Manual* in draft form and contributed to its improvement:

John Arnold
North Carolina State University

Karl Bauman
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Joe Bondi
University of South Florida

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Noe Middle School
Louisville, KY

Shirley Hammond
Brookland School
Washington, DC

Julia Thomason
Appalachian State University

The Needmor Fund of Toledo, Ohio, provided financial support for the development of the *Middle Grades Assessment Program*.

# Chapter 1.
# Introduction

## A. Why A Middle Grades Assessment Program?

Many groups and individuals have expressed a need for guidance in assessing middle grade schools. Parents have traditionally had a friendlier, warmer relationship with elementary schools than with junior high schools. As their children become more independent at home, parents become unsure of their role in their offsprings' education. Though they may question the quality of their young adolescents' schools, and though they are concerned about staff cutbacks and school reorganization, they are uncertain about their role in the educational process. Educators also feel the need for guidance, seeking criteria upon which to base decisions and practice in middle grade schooling. Similarly, elected and appointed officials want a framework for setting middle grade policy. In addition, concerned organizations and individuals ask what is known and what can be done about schooling for the age group, reacting with alarm to reports of increased junior high violence, substance abuse, young adolescent pregnancies, dropouts, and youth unemployment.

Often, uninformed about ways to encourage healthy adolescent development and learning, and lacking common vocabulary and criteria for assessment, these citizens have few tools available to help them examine their schools. Yet, as social and economic pressures mount, they are asked to support or make decisions about the closing of schools, the conversion from junior highs to middle schools, curricular changes, and teacher hiring policies.

The few existing school observation and assessment tools are not translated into behavior and conditions that can be seen and understood by lay persons as well as educators. The items on the *Middle Grades Assessment Program's* Checklist are stated in terms of what can be observed or asked, so that both lay people and professionals can have a common perspective. In other words, they can see and hear evidence that will lead to productive dialogue and informed conclusions about their schools.

While we have some clarity and agreement about the nature and structure of elementary and senior high schools, there is a remarkable lack of consensus about appropriate schools for young adolescents. At present, about 34 different grade configurations exist nationwide in schools for 10- to 15-year-olds, including two- and three-year junior highs, middle schools, elementary schools through grade eight, and dozens of other variations. An even greater problem than the confusion in grade organization is the lack of agreement about the purpose of schooling for the age group: is it socialization? training in "the basics?" social equity? preparation for high school? This lack of consensus inhibits dialogue and decision making about schooling for young adolescents. The *Program* will provide a common background — a knowledge of what is healthy and what encourages positive growth — for professionals and lay people who are concerned about middle grade schooling, no matter what their profession or philosophical orientation. This common foundation is grounded in what is known about early adolescent development.

## B. What Are the Developmental Needs of Young Adolescents?

According to Joan Lipsitz, Director of the Center for Early Adolescence, "There is considerable lack of fit between what we know about young adolescents and what we do to them five days a week in schools." [Lipsitz 1977] Decisions about schooling are more often made on the basis of buildings, budgets, and buses than on the needs of young adolescents who are experiencing profound physical, intellectual, psychological, and social changes. "This does not mean that schools are *responsible for* all these aspects of development, but that they must be *responsive to* the individuals experiencing this time in their lives." [Lipsitz 1977] The second chapter of this manual offers a review of what we know about young adolescents from researchers and practitioners. The items in the Checklist are keyed to seven recognized developmental needs of young adolescents:

1. the need for diversity,
2. the need for opportunities for self-exploration and self-definition,
3. the need for meaningful participation in school and community,
4. the need for positive social interaction with peers and adults,
5. the need for physical activity,
6. the need for competence and achievement,
7. the need for structure and clear limits.

## C. Schools for Young Adolescents: The Philosophy of the Center for Early Adolescence

The principles that guided the Center for Early Adolescence in preparing the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* should be clearly stated at the outset:

1) Adolescence is a normal stage in human development that is no more transitional or pathological than any other stage. Research shows that early adolescence is unique in the rapidity of physical growth and in the confluence of intensive social, emotional, and cognitive changes that occur between the ages of 10 and 15. Possibly the most striking characteristic of the age group is its vast diversity, since growth and change occur at different rates both for each adolescent and among groups of adolescents. Myths about pathological turmoil and stress, uncontrollable hormones, and inherent generation gaps stand in the way of a true understanding of the age group and should be rejected. People who are concerned about young adolescents should see them as who they are *right now*, not who they were or who they are going to be. Their energy, their questioning, their emotionalism, their silliness, and their desire for meaningful involvement are to be valued as healthy signs of growth, not ignored.

2) The *Middle Grades Assessment Program* is based on the premise that it is this understanding of adolescence as a normal and exciting developmental stage that should be the basis upon which decisions are made about middle grade schooling. By being responsive to the developmental needs of young adolescents, schools can create an environment that not only enhances learning and the enjoyment of learning, but also promotes the healthy development of young adolescents.

3) The education of young adolescents is a joint venture shared by professional educators, elected and appointed policymakers, parents, and concerned citizens. What happens to young adolescents in schools and as a result of schooling is too important to be left to any single group. The ideas, resources, and perspectives of all these groups are essential in making decisions about middle grade education.

4) Parents, concerned citizens, and educators need to know how to have a positive effect on the educational system. They possess the ability, the concern, and the resources to make valuable contributions to the education of young adolescents. To have an impact on decisions relating to middle grade schooling, they need a common vocabulary and a way to articulate their concern.

5) Finally, effective advocacy is more often collaborative than adversarial. Although radical, confrontational advocacy may occasionally be both appropriate and necessary to bring about change, advocacy that focuses on collaboration, informed dialogue, and consensus building seems to be more successful in promoting the improvement of middle grade schools. Further, young adolescents do not live in compartmentalized worlds of school, home, and community. Instead, they are actively trying to integrate these three parts of their lives into a whole that has meaning for them. This task is made easier if those adults who share responsibility and concern for their education model a healthy respect for different opinions while engaging in lively but collaborative advocacy on behalf of young adolescents. Thus, while there are times when people and systems must be confronted and changes demanded, we believe that consistent, collaborative advocacy more often produces change than does the finger-pointing, alienation, defensiveness, and entrenchment that may accompany confrontation.

## D. Using the Program

The Checklist itself is one part of the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* and is intended to be used as a part of the entire program. Individuals and groups undertaking an assessment should follow a step-by-step procedure:

Step 1: Read carefully the entire *User's Manual*, especially Chapters 1 through 4.

Step 2: Clarify your purpose and goals in using the Checklist. Follow the training techniques in the *Leader's Manual*, and view the slide-tape presentation. Know *why* you want to go into the school.

Step 3: Sharpen observation skills. Participation in the training sessions can enhance your ability to accomplish this task.

Step 4: Use the Checklist to observe a school.

Step 5: Share observations and insights about the school with other users and discuss the implications of these findings. Proposed techniques for conducting this debriefing are included in the *Leader's Manual* along with a proposed outline for an assessment report.

Step 6: Use the findings to increase dialogue, build consensus, and make decisions.

A bibliography and list of resources (Chapter 6) provides references for additional reading on early adolescence and schools as well as brief descriptions of other resources. This section will be especially helpful to people who seek examples of existing educational programs that are responsive to the developmental needs of young adolescents. The resources will be extremely useful as groups begin to use what they have learned in the assessment process to improve their schools.

The Glossary provides definitions of terms used throughout the manual so that individuals and groups using the *Assessment Program* can share a common understanding of key words and phrases.

# Chapter 2
# Early Adolescent Development

by Gayle Dorman and Joan Lipsitz

Early adolescence is a time of great growth and change as youth begin the transition from childhood to adulthood. We must understand what is happening to youth physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually if we are to encourage the healthy development of both individual youth for whom we are responsible and all youth in our society. To have this understanding, we must separate what we know to be *facts* about young adolescents from the myths and fears which have unfortunately become a part of our thinking about adolescence.

This chapter will review normal development in early adolescence by presenting what is known about the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual changes youth experience at this time and how these changes affect young adolescents and other people who are important in their lives.

## A. Physical Development

The most obvious change young adolescents experience is a period of rapid physical growth and development. Human beings grow more rapidly during this period than during any other time in their lives, except the time in their mothers' wombs. For girls, this growth spurt usually begins about age 9½, with the most rapid growth about age 12. The growth spurt begins and peaks for boys about two years later, about 11½ and 14.

In early adolescence the "baby fat" of childhood yields to a new, more adult look. Boys' voices deepen, their shoulders grow wider, and pubic and facial hair is visible. Similarly, girls' hips widen and pubic hair appears. These developments are called *secondary sex characteristics* because they emerge as the youthful reproductive system begins to mature, but they are not a part of the body's reproductive system. For girls, the development of the reproductive system is marked by the beginning of the menstrual cycle and breast development. The comparable events for boys are genital growth and the first ejaculation. The ages at which youth experience these events vary widely, due to some known causes such as nutrition, and causes still unknown. On the average, girls have their first menstrual period between the ages of 10 and 16½. Breast development usually begins between the ages of 8 and 13 and is completed between the ages of 13 and 18. For boys, genital growth may begin between the ages of 9½ and 14½ and end between 12½ and 17. When one looks at these age ranges, it becomes evident that it is perfectly normal for one 13-year-old to be physically mature and look like an adult, while another, also perfectly normal, looks like a child.

Consider for a moment the normal variations and the two-year difference in the growth spurt between boys and girls in an eighth-grade classroom. Because of normal variability among young adolescents, an 8- to 10-year span in *physical* development is quite likely. As J.M. Tanner, an adolescent physician, has said, "To speak, therefore, of a 'boy aged 14' is to be vague to the point of leaving out almost everything that is important about 14-year-old boys. The same is true of talking about 12-year-old girls (or 13-year-old boys or girls, naturally)." [Tanner 1974]

In considering the physical changes of early adolescence, two important facts stand out: First, early adolescence is a period of great change and growth which alters young people's self-image and appearance to others. They have to begin to see and think about themselves in a new way, as do their families and friends. Secondly, the wide differences in the age at which physical change begins and ends for individual youth are normal and to be expected.

## B. Social and Emotional Development

Much of our thinking about adolescence is influenced by the myth that adolescence is necessarily a period of storm, stress, and outright rebellion. Recent studies of normal adolescents and their families show that the social and emotional problems generally associated with adolescence have been greatly overemphasized. In reality, 80% of all adolescents make it through this time of great change without undue turmoil. Of that 80%, about one-quarter experience continuous, serene development; 35% experience development marked by surging starts and stops, childishness one day and adult behavior the next; about one-fifth develop in a turbulent manner that is not abnormal or pathological; and about one-fifth do not fit into any of the subgroups but their tendency is toward continuous or surging development. [Offer 1975] Only about 20% of all adolescents show signs of serious disturbance during this period. Evidence of serious disturbance rarely appears for the first time in early adolescence. Rather, the disturbed adolescent is likely to have been a child with problems. While the problems of disturbed youth are not to be taken lightly or ignored,

it is important to keep a realistic perspective on the "storm and stress" of adolescence. The myth of inherent turmoil is harmful to all young adolescents, because we fail to distinguish between behavior that is distressing (annoying to others) and behavior that is disturbed (harmful to the young person exhibiting the behavior).

Contrary to popular belief, young people who are genuinely disturbed do not "grow out of it" as they reach adulthood. The myth is also harmful for that 80% of all adolescents who are not experiencing undue storm and stress. By expecting irresponsible and crazy behavior of young adolescents, we communicate messages that diminish their self-esteem, invite distressing behavior, and raise the fears of the adults who live and work with them.

While early adolescence is not necessarily a time of turmoil and outright rebellion, some profound social and emotional changes do occur at this stage of development. Perhaps the most noticeable social change is the increasing importance of the peer group. This change may be viewed negatively and feared by parents and other adults who do not understand that involvement with friends is an important sign of social and emotional growth that is necessary if youth are to become healthy adults.

Throughout childhood, friendships with peers are based primarily upon shared activities and interests, not strong emotional ties. Young children's most important relationships are with adults, usually parents, upon whom they are dependent for physical and emotional care. Adults' most meaningful relationships are with people their own age, usually spouses or close friends, with whom they maintain mutual and interdependent relationships. Adolescence is the time when youth begin to learn how to establish and maintain a mutual and close relationship with people their own age. To girls especially, the peer group is crucial in developing the capacity for intimate caring and trust, for it is within the peer group that girls first begin *mutually* to share deep feelings, concerns, and hopes. It is also within the peer group that young adolescents experiment with their new social role of "adolescent" or "young adult" and with their new sexual role of "man" or "woman" in attempts to establish a sense of identity and appropriate behavior. Most young adolescents are more concerned with "How do you talk to a boy (or girl)? What do you say?" than with the physical sex act. It is through trial and error with peers that youth learn and practice socially acceptable behavior and begin to establish a sense of who they are as young men and women. One of the signs of serious disturbance in young people is the inability to relate to peers and fit into a peer group.

Parents' fears that the peer group will become more important or influential in the lives of their young adolescents than the family seem to be unfounded. Instead, adolescents themselves report that they look to the peer group for association and companionship and to their families for affection, identification, values, and help in solving large problems. [Kandel & Lesser 1972] Also, adolescents' attitudes toward their peers may depend more on the quality of their relationships with their families than upon the extent of involvement with their peers. Adolescents who get along well with their families are likely to have strong peer relationships. Adolescents who are alienated from their families will probably be alienated from, or will have inappropriate relationships with, their peers. Thus, young adolescents do not choose between close relationships with their peers *or* close relationships with their families. *Both* are necessary for healthy development.

Another common belief about the teenage years is that youth and their parents do not get along well and that youth do not respect or even like their parents. Again, surveys of normal adolescents reveal a different picture. Most adolescents report close and affectionate relationships with their parents. The ages of 12 to 14 seem to be the time of most disagreements between parents and children, with these arguments focusing on issues such as curfews, rules, and homework. These disagreements seem to be related to the family having to adjust its patterns of interaction with a child who is undergoing rapid changes rather than to the young adolescent rejecting or rebelling against the values or beliefs of the parents. Most families appear to be able to adjust the way they relate to each other based on the changing needs of the young adolescent for increased independence. We often see that families of disturbed adolescents have been unable to make these changes; they continue to relate to each other as if the young adolescent were a young child. Young adolescents do want freedom to choose their hair styles, clothes, and entertainment, and to be like their friends in these areas, but they are likely to retain their parents' social and moral values. In one survey, 88% of the 13- to 19-year-olds questioned said they respected their parents, 80% said they respected their parents' opinions and ideas, and only 20% had given up on being able to get along with their parents. [Sorenson 1973]

Thus, the young adolescent's social relationships are changing and adjusting as the young adolescent works toward mutual and interdependent relationships with both peers and family.

At the same time, young adolescents are experiencing two emotional changes which affect the way they see themselves and the way they relate to other people. Adults are often annoyed and baffled by young adolescents' egocentrism, or preoccupation with themselves — their appearance, their thoughts, their feelings — to the exclusion of thoughts or concerns about others. Because of the rapid physical and social changes they are experiencing, youth quite naturally become self-absorbed trying to figure out what is happening to them. Young adolescents assume that everyone else is just as obsessed with their appearance and behavior as they are. Hence, they spend hours getting ready to go out, looking in mirrors, worrying about what others will think of them, and exhaustively analyzing their slightest movements or words. They sense the constant presence of an "ima-

ginary audience." [Elkind 1967] A logical result of this self-consciousness and egocentrism is a feeling of uniqueness, of immunity to the harm that befalls others, even to death. "No one knows how I feel!" "Oh, mother, you just don't understand!" "That won't happen to me." "I won't get pregnant." These are some ways young adolescents express belief in their "personal fable" of uniqueness and immortality. [Elkind 1967]

While the behavior that accompanies egocentrism may generate impatience among adults who live and work with young adolescents, it is normal and will diminish as young adolescents develop the ability to differentiate between their thoughts and the thoughts of others. Gradually, they learn by experience and by developing mutual relationships that others do not constantly watch and judge them, that others share similar feelings, and that no one is immune to harm. [Elkind 1967]

The second important emotional change is in the way young adolescents see and feel about themselves. They may be happy and helpful at one moment, miserable and uncooperative the next. These mood and behavior swings are not unusual and may be associated with hormonal activity, with adjusting to the varying expectations of others, or with confusion and ambivalent feelings about the changes that are taking place in their bodies. The mood swings are compounded by the fact that 12-to 14-year-olds seem to experience more problems with self-image than they did when they were 8 to 11. Twelve-to 14-year-olds tend to have less stable and positive opinions about themselves and to think that other people have more negative opinions about them. This instability of self-image and diminished self-esteem usually declines in later adolescence as young people adjust to the changes that have taken place in their bodies and begin to develop a more stable sense of identity. Since children tend to have inflated opinions about themselves and their abilities, young adolescents may in fact be learning to be more realistic. As the authors of a study that examines the changes in self-image point out, reality *is not* the issue. Rather, it is the *adjustment* to reality that is distressing for young adolescents. [Simmons, *et al.*, 1973] The transition from elementary school to junior high school seems to be a particularly distressing event for young adolescents. In fact, 12-year-olds in junior high schools were found to have lower self-esteem than 12-year-olds in elementary schools [Simmons, *et al.*, 1973], and early-maturing girls who are dating in junior high school seem particularly vulnerable to low self-esteem. [Simmons, *et al.*, 1979] In contrast, early-developing boys have higher self-esteem while non-dating late-developing boys have lower self-esteem [Simmons, *et al.*, 1979]. Boys seem to react more to physical changes and girls to social changes, such as dating and school environment.

While there is much we do not understand about the causes of this lowered evaluation of one's self during early adolescence, it is apparent that this change affects young adolescents' behavior and their relationships with others.

## C. Intellectual Development

The third area of major change for young adolescents is intellectual development. Early adolescence is the time when many people begin to develop the ability to think abstractly and reflectively. Children's thinking is concrete and restricted to the information on hand and their present and past experiences. It is not until adolescence that humans begin to develop the intellectual ability to think about what "might be true if ..." and to reason about abstract ideas such as justice and love. They can better understand the reasons behind rules and behavior and question both, seeing not only right and wrong, but also "shades of grey." They can think about family, school, and community issues. For the first time, they can also analyze their own thoughts as well as the thoughts of others and make inferences about what others are thinking. Also, since they can think about what is possible rather than being tied to what they have actually experienced, young adolescents can begin to think about a personal future, more realistically matching their interests, abilities, accomplishments, and dreams with what is actually possible.

This change in thinking is gradual, and it is not unusual for a young adolescent to be able to think abstractly and reflectively in one area and to be restricted to concrete thought in another. For example, a young adolescent may be deeply concerned about social justice and reevaluating a childhood code of right and wrong but at the same time be unable to master abstract math and science concepts. For this reason it is good and necessary that they have opportunities for concrete thinking and experiences as well as opportunities to try out their new abstract reasoning skills. Not all adolescents or adults can think abstractly, but those who develop the ability usually do so during adolescence. Questioning of rules, thinking about the future, commitment to abstract ideals, excitement about learning new concepts, and the diminishing of egocentrism, are all signs of the development of these advanced thinking abilities, which are called "formal operations."

## D. Secondary Changes

The primary physical, social, emotional, and intellectual changes that occur in normal adolescent development cause many secondary changes in the way young adolescents view themselves and others. Young adolescents' behavior and concerns, as well as their needs, can be better understood if we consider these secondary developments and their relationship to the primary changes. John Hill has identified six secondary issues of adolescent development, which can serve as a summary of the developmental tasks of early adolescence:

| *Issue* | *Adolescent Change* |
|---|---|
| 1. Attachment | Younger children, physically and emotionally dependent upon their parents, usually see their parents as being all-powerful. During adolescence, youth must |

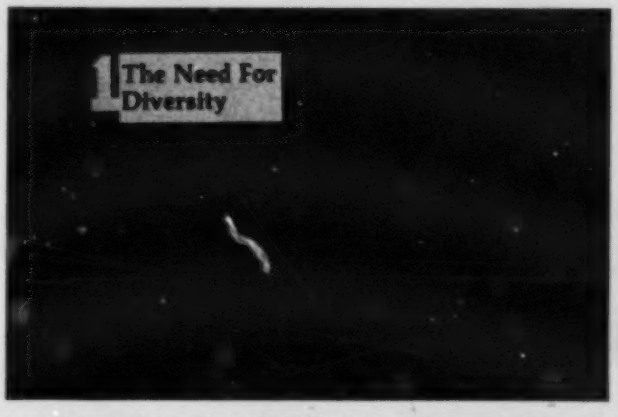
| | |
|---|---|
| | begin to establish a relationship with parents that is appropriate for adult children and their parents. This disengagement process is marked by the increased importance of peers and continued strong ties to parents. |
| 2. Autonomy | Behavioral independence is not a new issue that arises at adolescence, because most families encourage increasing independence throughout childhood. This autonomy is expanded to include new and broader responsibility for oneself and others during early adolescence. Rebelliousness does not necessarily accompany autonomy, especially if the family accommodates the youth's desire and capabilities for increased autonomy. |
| 3. Sexuality | Sexuality is not a new issue either. Young adolescents have learned in early childhood a set of values about their bodies and physical attractiveness and what it means to be a man or woman. Adolescents are figuring out how they will incorporate sexual activity into this set of values and beliefs. By sexual activity, we mean everything from "What do you say to a girl (or boy)?" to holding hands, to caring deeply for a person of the opposite sex, to sexual intercourse. |
| 4. Intimacy | Friendships with peers are no longer based solely on shared activities; now they include mutual disclosure of feelings, concerns, and dreams. Especially for girls, these intense relationships with peers are where young people begin to learn trust, empathy, and self-disclosure, all vital ingredients in intimate relationships. |
| 5. Achievement | As adolescents develop the capability to think abstractly and reflectively, they can begin to have a sense of their personal future for the first time. They can think about their future in relation to their own interests, abilities, and achievements, and for the first time think realistically about a vocation. Their industry and ambition can be focused on realistic, future-oriented activities. |
| 6. Identity | Adolescents are changing their childhood sense of identity to incorporate the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and secondary changes which are taking place in their lives. They are trying to establish a sense of uniqueness, a continuity between their past, present, and future, and a sense of belonging to a group. The peer group is crucially important as the adolescent experiments with behavior and receives feedback. The best that can be achieved is that young people grow to know and like themselves and have a general sense of well-being and confidence. |

(Based on John P. Hill, *Understanding Early Adolescence: A Framework*, © 1980, Center for Early Adolescence.)

**All these issues are concerns throughout the life cycle. In order to understand early adolescence as one stage in human development, we must understand the unique changes that young adolescents experience. Adults can help ease the strain of rapid change by responding sensitively to young adolescents' needs as the changes occur.**

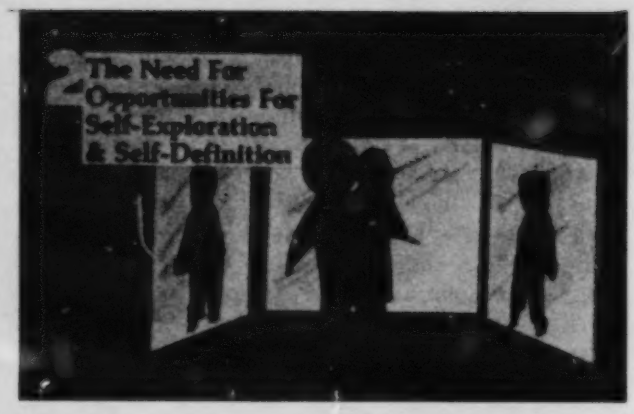
## E. Needs of Young Adolescents for Healthy Development

Based on what we know about young adolescents, there are seven needs to be met if youth are to experience healthy development.

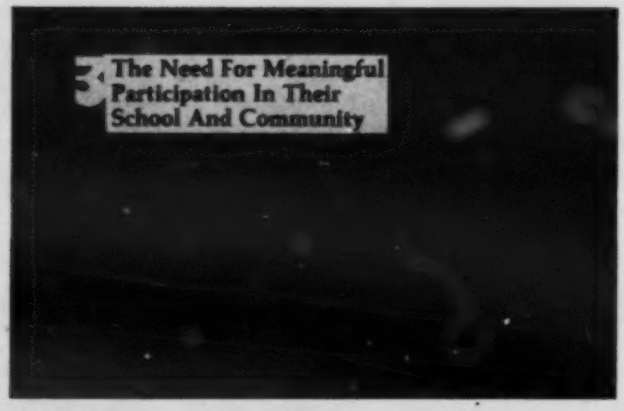



1. *The need for diversity.* We have discussed the wide variations in normal physical and intellectual development, the differing social expectations of adults and peers, and the personal emotional changes that occur in early adolescence. Based on this information, it is impossible to think that young adolescents are "all alike." Therefore, different adolescents need different kinds of opportunities for learning, different relationships with a variety of people, and different opportunities for personal reflection and self-exploration. Some need to refine their concrete thinking skills and others want to be challenged to think abstractly. Some need close and intensive relationships with a few people, while others need less intense relationships with many people. Diverse opportunities for learning and growing are necessary if early and late developers, concrete and abstract thinkers, and dependent and autonomous youth are to experience healthy development.

Individual young adolescents also need varied experiences and people in their lives. Because of their new physical and intellectual abilities and their new social expectations, individual adolescents may have a wide variety of interests. As one would expect, they want to try out their new abilities in as many ways as possible. They may be fascinated with the circus one day and totally involved in deep personal questioning about right and wrong the next. They may think games "childish" in the morning yet become engrossed in field day activities in the afternoon. Opportunities for diverse experiences and relationships enhance young adolescents' establishment of a new sense of identity, their realistic matching of interests and abilities with a future vocation, and their learning appropriate sexual and social behavior.



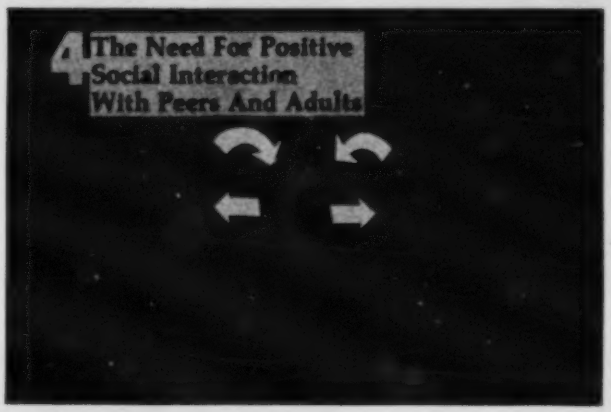

2. *The need for opportunities for self-exploration and self-definition.* This need is directly related to the changing sense of identity that occurs in early adolescence. If young adolescents are to establish a sense of who they are and what they can do, incorporating not only their new bodies and social roles but also their past and their future, they need time alone to sort out all the changes that are so rapidly occurring. They need time with peers and time with adults to test and talk about their concerns and ideas about themselves. They need both quiet and active time to indulge in deep thought about themselves. This need may appear selfish or self-centered to adults, but opportunities for self-exploration and self-definition are essential if adolescents are to complete the task of forming a sense of identity.




3. *The need for opportunities for meaningful participation in school and community.* As young adolescents become more independent and begin to think about other people and larger social problems, they want to assume new responsibilities, to have a role in making the rules that affect them, and to help other people. If they are to learn independence and responsibility, they need opportunities to take the initiative and to have a meaningful voice in making decisions that affect them. Participation is learned by trial and error. Adults help meet this need when they model democratic decision making, provide youth the structure they need to make wise decisions and are willing to allow young people to think creatively, to act on their ideas and to experience the logical and natural consequences of their decisions.

Young adolescents are trying to figure out their role in family, school, and community. They are hungry for opportunities to make meaningful contributions to others. They are eager to try out their new abilities and interests in ways that make a real difference in their lives and the lives of others.

Young adolescents need opportunities to create and run clubs and activities with adult guidance. They need opportunities to help in their families' daily operation, to contribute to the functioning of their schools, and to participate in meaningful community service projects if they are to feel like worthy human beings. These opportunities foster improved self-esteem, autonomy, achievement.

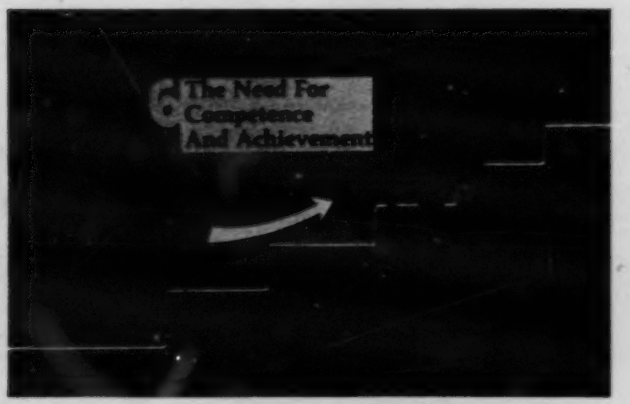



4. *The need for opportunities for positive social interaction with both peers and adults.* We have discussed in detail the needs of young adolescents for close relationships with peers and family. Adolescents look to peers for association, companionship, and criticism regarding their new social roles. They look to parents for affection, identification, values, and help in solving large problems. Young adolescents also need opportunities to relate to adults other than their parents. Some young adolescents idolize or have crushes on selected adults. They need positive social interaction with these and other adults to gain a more realistic view of caring relationships. The myth that young adolescents do not like or respect adults is simply not true. They do not want to be isolated from the adult world. They need the security and the sense of being liked that comes from positive social interaction with adults. They also need to see the modeling of appropriate social and sexual behavior by adults whom they admire.

5. *The need for physical activity.* Anyone who lives or works with young adolescents is well aware that their generally high energy level is often accompanied by periods of "laziness." The high energy level may be directly related to the rapid rate of physical growth and to hormone activity. The fatigue may be related to young adolescents' tendency to overdo physically and become exhausted, to their preoccupation with emo-

tional issues, or to their bodies' hormonal level. Young adolescents need opportunities to vent this energy through physical activity of their own choosing and through activities designed to improve muscle and bone coordination. Sometimes they need strenuous activities such as calisthenics or pick-up basketball; at other times they just need to squirm or move around.

6. *The need for competence and achievement.* Young adolescents need opportunities to try out their new physical, social, and intellectual abilities and to find out what they can do well. For the first time they can think about connections between present achievements and future roles. Perhaps most important, young adolescents are hungry for opportunities to succeed at something. Their faltering self-esteem needs successes to build confidence and a sense of worthiness. An important part of establishing a sense of identity is finding out what one does well.

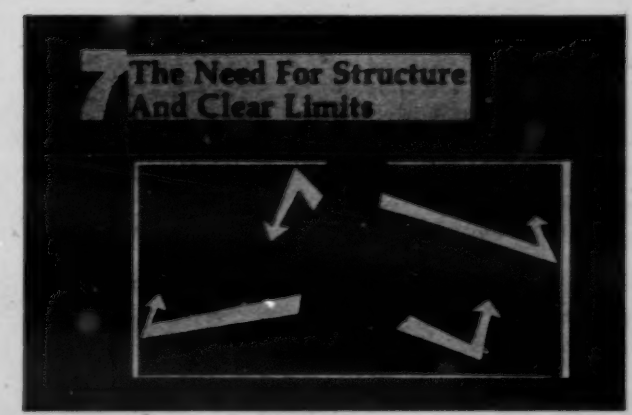



Young adolescents need the self-satisfaction that comes from knowing they have done something well and that what they have done is important to someone else. Just as important, they need recognition from their peers and from adults. This recognition gives them the feedback they need to sort out appropriate behavior and to learn what their true abilities are. It is vital that young adolescents receive recognition for a wide variety of competencies. The youth who writes sensitive poetry, the one who builds good mailboxes, the one who heads a city park clean-up committee, the one who tutors younger children and the one who is an excellent babysitter, all need recognition. If only certain competencies are rewarded, such as good grades and physical prowess, then early developers can get locked into using certain abilities and never develop others. Similarly, late developers can suffer because their abilities are not valued and recognized.

7. *The need for structure and clear limits.* Although young adolescents are seeking increased independence and self-direction, they need to know what is expected of them. They continue to need the security provided by clear limits. The diversity of the age group extends to the need for structure and limits. Some young adolescents need more structure than others. Most young adolescents are increasingly capable of participating in establishing the rules and limits they will live by. It is the adult's role to provide whatever structure each young adolescent needs at a particular time so that the adolescent will not be overwhelmed by freedom but will have opportunities to develop self-direction.

Young adolescents need to help establish structure and clear limits, so they can learn how to be both free and responsible. Some of the most confused and unhappy adolescents are those who report their parents let them do anything they want. Sometimes youth needs limits on their behavior to prevent them from harming themselves, especially during that time when they feel they are immune from harm. At times, when young adolescents' self-esteem is especially weak, they need experiences that are carefully structured to insure their success, such as completing homework projects they are convinced they cannot do or preparing simple meals for the family. Finally, young adolescents need to know that adults care enough about them to establish structure and clear limits and respect their abilities and judgment enough to involve them in the process.

In using the *Middle Grades Assessment Program*, it is important to remember the developmental characteristics of young adolescents and the resultant needs of the age group for *diversity, self-exploration and self-definition, meaningful participation, positive social interaction, physical activity, competence and achievement, and structure and clear limits.*



# Chapter 3
# Responsive Schools

Schools that encourage healthy adolescent development do not all look the same nor do they operate identical programs. Safety and academic effectiveness are necessary for *all* schools, but they are not sufficient in themselves to produce a school that is responsive to young adolescents. The school must also actively take into account the developmental needs of young adolescents.

## A. The Essential Characteristics

There are two characteristics that must be present in any school that is responsive to its students and to the community it serves. First, the students and the staff must feel safe both physically and emotionally. Learning and growth are not likely to occur in any environment that is permeated by fear for personal safety, because energy is diverted from teaching and learning to protecting one's self and belongings from harm. Equally detrimental to learning and growing is fear for one's emotional safety. Neither students nor adults are willing to invest themselves and to take the risks necessary for teaching and learning in an environment that ignores or destroys feelings of individual worth.

The requirement for physical and emotional safety is central to the success of any school, but especially so for those serving young adolescents. The rapid and profound physical, intellectual, emotional, and social changes young adolescents are experiencing make them particularly vulnerable to each other and to adults. Schools in which all people, staff, and students, feel physically and emotionally safe usually provide the friendly, relaxed but challenging environment that is necessary for young adolescents to learn and grow. If a school does not insure the physical and emotional safety of each individual within it, it cannot be a healthy environment for young adolescents, or for adults.

Second, schools that are responsive to young adolescents must be academically effective. Students must be learning. Although controversial, standardized test scores are the most widely used objective measure of learning we currently have available. Important subjective measures, such as students' positive attitudes toward learning and their ability to think independently and to identify and use a wide variety of resources for learning, are included throughout this manual. From the many ways to measure academic effectiveness with standardized test scores, the following two measures are suggested:

1) The students' test scores on reading and math are close to or above the district-wide* average scores, *or* are moving toward that average, and
2) The students' progress rates in reading and math are similar for different socio-economic and racial groups. Thus, while middle-class students may have higher reading and math skills than students from a less affluent socio-economic background upon entry to the school, this gap is not widened (and is preferably diminished) as all students progress academically at similar rates.

## B. Effective Schools Literature

Several researchers who used test scores to identify academically effective schools found that these schools have some characteristics in common. In a landmark study of English secondary schools, Michael Rutter and his colleagues identified several factors that seem to be related to student success. They concluded that the overall school environment — in other words, the school as a social organization — makes a difference in student behavior and achievement. They found that academically effective schools have a clearly stated philosophy, including values and expectations, that is understood and accepted by students and staff and that consistently applies to the whole school. While the philosophy may vary from school to school and cannot be prescribed, Rutter and others have identified some of its essential components. Similarly, Weber and Edmonds have studied effective American elementary schools and have identified factors which seem to contribute to school effectiveness. Rutter, Weber, and Edmonds are among the first researchers who have attempted to identify characteristics of academically effective schools. Much of their research is focused on elementary schools. While much remains to be learned about what makes schools academically effective, their findings are significant and helpful:

1. Effective schools have positive expectations of all children. The school staff believes that all children

*"District" is used as a general term for a reference group. Some districts contain only one junior high or middle school and some districts encompass urban areas with dozens of middle grade schools. Since there is little consensus across the country in the use of this term, each group using the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* should select a "district" or reference group with which to meaningfully compare the scores of students in the school being observed.

have the ability to learn. [Edmonds, Weber]

2. Effective schools say that they emphasize academics, and they carry out that emphasis in the classrooms. [Rutter 1979, Weber]
3. Effective elementary schools stress reading and math skills. [Edmonds]
4. In effective schools, high value is placed on individual student progress. A carefully constructed testing program monitors student progress. The test results are used to design educational activities that help individual students make progress in weak areas. [Edmonds, Weber]
5. The administrative leader, usually the principal, has a vision of what the school can and should be, articulates that vision, and generally sets the tone for the school environment. The leader clearly articulates expectations for staff and students. [Edmonds, Weber]
6. The principal makes major decisions, using a management style that enables staff and students both to *feel* represented and actually to *be* represented. [Rutter 1979]
7. The principal is the "instructional leader" of an effective school, not only establishing standards for instruction but also acting as a resource to the teaching staff on instructional matters. [Edmonds]
8. Students behave better and achieve more when teachers praise their work and show appreciation for their accomplishments rather than focus on their failures. [Rutter 1979]
9. Academic achievement and attendance are higher in schools where students perceive the environment to be comfortable and pleasant. [Rutter 1979]
10. Achievement, attendance, and behavior are better in schools where there are many opportunities for large numbers of students to assume responsibility and participate in the operation of the school. [Rutter 1979]
11. Effective schools provide an orderly, but not rigid, environment where expectations are clearly stated. [Edmonds, Weber]
12. In effective schools, the philosophy, expectations and rules are generally accepted by both the students and the staff. [Rutter 1979]
13. Several features appear to have limited impact on academic effectiveness:
    a. Resources. The effective schools identified and studied by Edmonds were inner-city elementary schools, often with fewer resources than many other schools. Rutter believes that while cuts in resources may be detrimental to morale, it is unlikely that additional resources alone would increase effectiveness. As Rutter says in a summary of his research in the journal, *Pediatrics*, "More of the same is not an effective answer." [Rutter 1980] However, he does say that there is a point below which schools will suffer if resources are not increased.
    b. Class Size. Rutter and others have found no consistent relationship between school and class size and academic effectiveness. [Rutter 1980]
    c. Punishment. Rutter found that detention and corporal punishment had little effect on student behavior. Student behavior was worse in classrooms where teachers frequently interrupted lessons to reprimand students and when unofficial physical punishment was used. [Rutter 1979]
14. In a review of research on effective schools that appears in a special issue of the *Harvard Graduate School of Education Association Bulletin*, Timpane states another characteristic of effective schools that has been suggested by many authors. Effective schools are *open* systems; that is, the school organization and the staff are open to change. This openness and support for self-evaluation and change is crucial in all levels of the school organization and includes teachers, support staff, principals, parents, school boards, and administrators.

These identified characteristics of academically effective schools are necessary in schools that are responsive to young adolescents. However, in addition to insuring physical and emotional safety and being academically effective, responsive schools make decisions and plan programs based on an understanding of the characteristics and needs of young adolescents.

## C. School Responsiveness to Developmental Needs

Young adolescents are attempting to understand their developing physical and intellectual capabilities, their changing social relationships, and their diverse interests and concerns. They are also trying to integrate all these changes into their past, present, and future in a way that makes sense to them and establishes who they are. It is impossible for young adolescents to separate themselves from this task when they enter a school environment. Schools that expect them to do so will probably not be healthy environments *or* academically effective schools.

Responsive schools consider the young adolescent as a *whole* person and recognize that young adolescents learn better in an environment which takes them into account. Responsive schools also recognize that the unique characteristics of adolescence provide rich resources for learning and motivation to learn, and tap these resources within young adolescents.

Let us look again at the seven developmental needs of young adolescents discussed in Chapter II. How can schools be responsive to these needs?

1. The *need for diversity* occurs in individuals and in groups of young adolescents. Not only do groups of young adolescents vary tremendously in physical size and development, intellectual capabilities and interests, but each individual young adolescent's interests, concerns, and capabilities vary from day to

day and even hour to hour as he/she experiences rapid growth in so many areas of life. Schools can respond to this need for diversity by offering variety in the curriculum, flexibility in the schedule and the use of available space, varied instructional and resource materials, and variety in the school staff as well.

In a school that responds to its students' need for diversity, one would not find students all doing the same thing at the same time in similar rooms with similar materials; for example, one would not expect to see the classic stereotype of all students sitting in neat rows of desks, all facing teachers who are lecturing, or all reading from textbooks that are open to the same page. Instead, in responsive schools, students and teachers are engaged in different learning activities in and out of the classrooms, using many different kinds of print and nonprint materials. The curriculum reflects a balance among the basic subjects (such as reading, language arts, math, and science), high interest exploratory classes, and other activities. The curriculum probably changes somewhat each year. Scheduling is flexible and includes some longer stretches of time (two hours or more) for extended interdisciplinary study and some 40- to 50-minute "periods." A variety of teaching methods including small group work, lectures, learning by doing, individualized assignments, and learning centers, is used.

In general, the varied abilities and interests of individuals and groups are matched with an equally diverse educational environment. One statement you would not hear from staff about students in a responsive school is, "They're all alike!"

2. Young adolescents need *opportunities for self-exploration and self-definition.* Schools respond to this need by focusing the basic subjects, the exploratory courses, and the activities on content and skills acquisition that helps students to integrate their developing capabilities, interests, and relationships into a sense of who they are. For example, keeping a diary and writing weekly summaries may be a part of a language arts project. A group of students in a social studies class may undertake a study of adolescence in China and compare their lives with the lives of Chinese adolescents. Students are encouraged to pursue answers to their *own* questions, in addition to their teachers' questions. Responsive schools offer numerous opportunities for students to become personally involved in their learning and to relate school and what they are learning to their total lives.

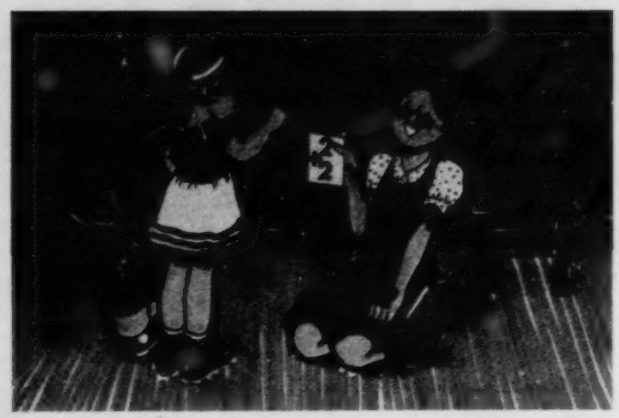
A guidance program that responds to unique needs and concerns of young adolescents is extremely important. The program is focused on self-exploration, self-definition, and prevention, and is not problem- or crisis-oriented. Career guidance is a secondary function and takes the form of exploring occupations and personal interests, not making occupational decisions. The counselor is highly visible throughout the school and the guidance program is integrated into the curriculum through exploratory classes and activities.

School becomes a tool for young adolescents to use in exploring and learning new competencies, skills, and identities, not a place where they are forced into being something they are not and where their questions, concerns, and energies are ignored or suppressed.

3. Young adolescents need opportunities for *meaningful participation in their schools and communities.* Schools can provide the structure and the means for young adolescents to have a real voice in running their schools and to make meaningful contributions through student initiated study and activities, student councils, student committees, and projects such as designing and constructing furniture and learning materials. Young adolescents should have opportunities to identify and carry out projects that will improve the school environment such as cleaning the cafeteria and building outdoor recreation and nature study areas. Schools can also offer opportunities for students to contribute their knowledge and new competencies to their communities. Service learning may be an integral part of the curriculum with students spending some time each week working in a community agency and then tying together what they are learning in class and in the agency

work. Classes may conduct projects such as a math class designing and teaching basic math skill games to kindergarten children, or a science class cleaning up a wilderness park as a part of its study of ecology.

Activities such as these not only enhance learning for students but also enhance their sense of personal value.

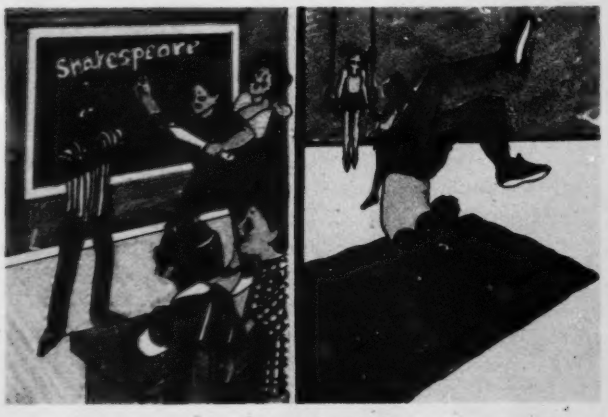


4. *Positive social interaction with peers and adults* is extremely important to young adolescents, in light of their changing relationships with adults, especially parents, and the increasing importance of peers. Recognizing the importance of the peer group, the school can provide both the structure that protects young adolescents from the negative aspects of peer pressure and the opportunities for positive peer interactions. Small group learning activities and assignments are an excellent way of helping young adolescents to work constructively with peers. The availability of space for small groups of students to congregate informally also encourages positive interactions.

   Positive social interactions between adults and students are facilitated by advisor-advisee relationships, staff participation in activities, and informal contact between students and staff outside the classroom.

5. Young adolescents *need physical activity.* Their high energy level is immediately obvious to the most casual observer. Responsive schools provide structured outlets for this physical energy, rather than ignoring or trying to suppress it. There are opportunities throughout the school day, such as breaks and lunchtime, for young adolescents to engage in physical activity. Physical education is an integral part of the curriculum. It is *noncompetitive,* taking into account the varied sizes and abilities of the age group, and it teaches basic skills, coordination, and life-long sports such as swimming, jogging, tennis, and calisthenics.

   Teachers respond to the need for physical activity by providing opportunities for students to move around in the classroom and by accepting some unorthodox sitting positions, so long as such activity does not interfere with learning.




6. The young adolescent's need for *competence and achievement* is probably being met when students are generally excited about school, expect to learn, and are personally engaged in their learning. Schools that promote competence and achievement among students usually have positive expectations of all students, are generous (but honest) with rewards and praise, and provide opportunities for increasing independence and responsibility. There is an overriding academic emphasis in the school, reflected in high quality instruction and high student expectations. Students have some opportunities to evaluate their own performance. Thus, they know what they are doing, why they are doing it, and whether they are doing it well. A wide variety of teaching methods and a balanced curriculum of basic subjects, high interest exploratory courses, and extra-curricular activities provide a diversity which insures that each student can be successful at something.

7. *Structure and clear limits* can provide the security young adolescents need to learn and grow during a time of rapid and pervasive change. However, rigid structure and excessive limits in schools are detrimental to healthy adolescent development and invite hostility, rejection, withdrawal and/or rebellion from young adolescents. Schools that are responsive to this need, and all the other needs of young adolescents, have clearly stated limits that are generally accepted by both students and staff. One effective method of insuring that limits will be generally accepted by young adolescents is to involve them in a meaningful way in the establishment of rules, reasons for the rules, and consequences for violating rules. When students and staff in responsive schools speak of discipline, they refer to learning and responsibility, not punishment. Students' questions and complaints about rules and limits are seen as natural opportunities for dialogue, not as signs of immature insurrection.

   Structure in the classroom is both a prerequisite for learning and a part of quality instruction. Structure has little to do with the name of the teaching method being used by the teacher. It is quite possible for a classroom where lectures are used as the main teaching method to be woefully lacking in structure, while a classroom where small group work, learning centers, and individualized study are used simultaneously could be very well structured. The key factors are student knowledge and acceptance of the limits and student knowledge of what they are doing and why, not necessarily the initial outward appearance of the classroom. In well structured classrooms the teacher and students work together to set the learning goals, the activities to be engaged in, and the behavioral limits. The teacher creates an atmosphere in which students are expected to take an active role in learning.

   Throughout the responsive school there are opportunities for young adolescents to contribute to setting limits and establishing structure. There are increasing levels of independence and self-regulation as young adolescents grow and mature, with whatever additional structure they need being supplied by adults.

It is apparent that these needs of young adolescents and the ways in which schools respond cannot be separated into neat compartments. Appropriate structure in a classroom makes it possible for young adolescents to experience competence and achievement. This sense of competence is enhanced as students participate in the life of their school and community. Similarly, social interaction with peers and adults often becomes an opportunity for self-exploration and self-definition, with the new self-understanding reflecting itself in improved social skills. The interdependency of these needs requires schools to look at young adolescents as they are at this unique developmental stage in order to design environments that encourage learning and healthy growth.

# Chapter 4
# The Checklist

## A. Intended Uses

The Checklist is designed to be used by local groups of educators, parents, citizens, and policymakers. A school board, a citizens' advisory council, a parent group, or a school staff can use the Checklist as a tool in observing and assessing their middle grade school(s). The group using the Checklist may be composed of only members of one of these groups or of representatives from various groups. Whatever group composition is used, it is hoped that the *Assessment Program* will be made available to all local groups who are concerned with or have responsibility for the middle grade school(s) and that the representatives of all such groups will come together after using the Checklist to discuss the findings and their implications for decision making. It is highly recommended that a written report be prepared as a result of the observation and assessment. This report becomes the basis for endeavors to strengthen the school's responsiveness to young adolescents. The *Program* may be used as an additional resource in an ongoing assessment of schools for young adolescents or as a tool to initiate interest and involvement in schooling for the age group. Some examples of possible uses of the *Middle Grades Assessment Program* are:

1. A local school board uses the *Program* as a part of its program to train new board members.
2. A state-mandated citizens' council uses the *Program* in its assessment of middle or junior high school quality.
3. The staff of a middle school uses the *Program* in its accreditation self-study.
4. A parent-teacher organization uses the *Program* to observe a junior high school and to encourage discussion among parents, teachers, principal, and students about strengths and weaknesses of the school.
5. A school staff uses the *Program* at its own school and at other schools on an exchange basis as a part of an in-service training program.
6. A local school board seeking consensus for policy decisions concerning middle grade schools uses the *Program* with a representative group of parents, teachers, administrators, and citizens.
7. A citizens' advocacy group uses the *Program* with a representative group and sponsors a series of widely publicized forums to raise public understanding and commitment to the community's junior high and middle schools.
8. A group of parents, concerned about the quality of their young adolescents' education, is unsure of what questions to ask. They use the *Program* to begin a series of discussions with the school board and the school staff, to observe the school, and to improve the school.
9. A group of students, with guidance from a teacher, undertakes a self-study of the school. They decide to use the *Program* to structure their observations and discussion.
10. University faculty and students use the *Program* as a component of their curriculum designed to prepare middle grade teachers.

The *Middle Grades Assessment Program* is intended to be used as a *tool* for observation, assessment, and decision making in schools for young adolescents. Grounded in what is known about the age group, it provides necessary information on early adolescence and on schools that can be used in planning to strengthen middle grade schools. The Checklist is not intended to be used as a strict evaluation instrument, with its findings to be used against schools or school boards. Instead, the information and insights gained by individuals and groups through the use of this *Program* are intended to serve as a basis for informed dialogue and consensus building with others who are involved in the schooling of young adolescents.

## B. Guidelines for Use

There are six crucial points to remember if the Checklist is to be used properly and effectively:

1. *Valid use of the Checklist is dependent upon the observation skills of the user and the user's understanding of the information upon which the Checklist is based.* Therefore, it is imperative that users of the Checklist carefully read the *User's Manual* and participate in a training session designed to clarify the purpose for which the group is using the Checklist, to review the information presented in the manual, and to sharpen the users' observation skills. Proposed training techniques for such a session are included in the *Leader's Manual* which accompanies this manual.
2. *Responsive schools do not all look alike.* For this reason, observed behavior must also be interpreted and

assessed. It is difficult to observe behavior for three reasons: 1) Many ideal characteristics of schools, such as personal relationships between teachers and students, are difficult to describe behaviorally because the relationship looks different depending on who is involved and who is observing. 2) There is a temptation to take specific pieces of observable behavior and blow them out of proportion, rather than observing extensively and considering how individual behaviors fit into a composite profile of the school. 3) Some characteristics are not easily observable but are too important to be ignored.

In spite of these problems, it is impossible to assess a school's quality without observing it in action. Thus, a checklist of observable items is most appropriate for use by lay people and professionals. The problems have been addressed by identifying and selecting the key behaviors that are most frequently observable, by presenting the Checklist items as evidence of the existence of the ideal characteristics, and by recognizing and providing alternative measures for those crucial characteristics that are either difficult or impossible to observe. For example, one such ideal characteristic is that every child has a personal and supportive relationship with at least one adult at the school. One school may have an advisor-advisee program in which all staff members have an advisee group of 10 to 15 students that meets daily in a homeroom. Another school may have an advisee program where all staff members arrive at the school 15 minutes early every day and the students in the advisee groups have individual conferences with their advisor before school once every two weeks. Although the observable behavior is different in these two schools, the mechanism for being responsive to the developmental need for positive social interaction with adults is present.

3. *It is important that users of the Checklist be familiar with the ideal characteristics of responsive schools and the developmental needs of young adolescents so that the Checklist items will be viewed as evidence, not as ultimate proof of the presence or absence of ideal characteristics.* Users are encouraged to look beyond the observable behaviors that are present to determine whether or not they are truly indicators of the existence of an ideal characteristic. For example, the school may have an advisor-advisee program in which groups of 30 students meet with a single teacher for a brief homeroom period that is spent going over announcements for the day and keeping order until the first class begins. This program is *not* producing productive adult-student relationships. On the other hand, users are encouraged to look beyond the absence of observable behavior indicated in the Checklist items to see if the school is fulfilling the ideal characteristic in another way. For example, a school may have no advisor-advisee program, but faculty and staff may be seen in frequent positive interactions with students, before school, between classes, at lunchtime, and after school.
4. *Just as different schools do not look the same, one school may look different at various times of the day or on separate days.* Some schools have very different programs in the morning and afternoon, so an observer would have to see an entire day (and preferably more than one day) in order to arrive at an accurate picture of the school. Also, what happens before and after school is a crucial part of the total school environment. Schools, like the people in them, have good and bad, typical and exceptional days. A school would look very different on the day before winter vacation than it would on a more ordinary day. Therefore, in order to get an accurate picture of the total school environment, Checklist users need to visit the school on different days at various times of the day and ask the staff and students if that is a typical or an atypical day.
5. *Whenever possible, key school staff should be involved from the beginning of the assessment process.* School staff should be well informed in advance and should be invited to participate in planning and conducting the assessment. They should be reassured that the assessment is not an attack upon the school but a collaborative endeavor to improve schooling for young adolescents. In the unfortunate event that key school staff are unable or unwilling to participate in the assessment, it is important to remember that you have a right to visit your public school. You must also remember that the principal has the responsibility to operate an open but orderly school.
6. *The Checklist is a valuable and wise use of your time and energy only if the findings are used to improve your school's responsiveness to young adolescents.* Before observing a school with the Checklist, an individual or group needs to decide why they want to observe the school and how their learning and insights will be used. Next, the willing cooperation and involvement of the school staff should be sought. The plan for using the findings should include opportunities for individual observers to compare observations, assessments, and insights; opportunities for observers to discuss their observations with the school's staff; an opportunity for the observers to write a summary report of their assessment; and opportunities to use the Checklist process and findings as a basis for informed dialogue and consensus building in making decisions about schooling for young adolescents. Some ideas for debriefing, writing the summary report, and using the findings of the Checklist are included in the *Leader's Manual*.

If the use of the Checklist includes observing a school in which the user will be a visitor, it is wise to follow a few guidelines to insure a smooth visit. These guidelines are for parents, citizens, and for teachers and principals visiting any school other than their own.

## Guidelines for Visiting Schools

1. Call the principal to arrange a time for your visit.
2. If the principal has not been involved in your decision to observe the school using the *Middle Grades Assessment Program*, clearly state to him/her:
   a) Who you are, including your name and affiliation with the school — school board member, parent, citizen, teacher from another school.
   b) The purpose of your visit, as clarified in the initial training session.
   c) Your desire to talk with him/her upon arrival at the school.

   Offer to show him/her a copy of the Checklist and the entire *User's Manual*.
3. If the date you propose for the visit is inconvenient or an atypical day (e.g., the entire 7th grade will be away on a field trip, another group of visitors is already scheduled for that day), ask the principal to suggest an acceptable day within the next week.
4. In order to get a more accurate and comprehensive picture of the school, arrange with the principal to visit on two or three different days, either for all day or at different times of the day.
5. Upon arriving at the school, talk with the principal about acceptable protocol. Do the teachers expect visitors to enter before class begins and remain until class ends, or can you "float" in and out of classes? When is the best time to talk to teachers? Is it acceptable to talk to students in the classroom? If it is not acceptable to talk to students in the classroom, when can you talk to them?
6. Be open and friendly to all school staff and students. Initiate informal conversations using questions from the Checklist. Thank staff and students for talking with you. Do not be secretive about what you are doing. Answer any questions about what you are doing clearly but briefly.
7. End your visit with a brief report back to the principal. Express your appreciation for the principal's and staff's time and effort. Comment on strengths you observed. Your group can invite the principal to a debriefing session, and you can discuss your findings in detail at that time.

The success of your visit to the school will be measured by how much accurate information you gain, which will depend primarily upon your interviewing, observation, and listening skills. These skills can be learned by anyone who is willing to invest some time and energy in clarifying biases, reviewing some basic information, and practicing the skills beforehand. The following lists of skills and the group training session outlined in the *Leader's Manual* can provide Checklist users an opportunity to improve their assessment skills.

**Interviewing Skills**

1. Know why you are visiting the school and *how* the information you gain will be used. This should be clarified before going to the school. (See *Leader's Manual.*)
2. Know your own biases and beliefs. Do not expect the interviewee to agree with you and do not interject your biases into the interview. Remember that your purpose is to gain information on what the school is like, *not* to discuss what you think it should or should not be. That discussion comes later.
3. Be thoroughly familiar with the Interview Forms.
4. Help the interviewee feel at ease and ready to talk. Be at ease yourself. Be informal, natural, and tactful. Introduce yourself. State your purpose in general but clear terms. Answer any questions the interviewee may have about what you are doing. Be brief but clear. Give the interviewee an opportunity to talk and answer questions, e.g., What is your name? your role in the school? the length of time you have been at the school?
5. Do not ask leading questions. Do not ask questions which can be easily answered "Yes" or "No" unless followed up by "How." "Why" questions may cause the interviewee to feel defensive. Use them only when necessary.
6. Practice good listening skills. (See next section.)
7. Ask questions when you do not understand the interviewee's response. Check your understanding often by repeating what you heard the interviewee say or by paraphrasing and summarizing. Let the interviewee know that you understand.
8. Agree with the interviewee when possible. Encourage him/her to continue or elaborate.
9. Do not disagree with or challenge the interviewee. Do not give advice. This antagonizes people and makes them want *not* to talk.
10. Allow the interviewee enough time to think and to respond. Allow yourself time to think. Some silence is helpful.
11. *You* are responsible for the direction and timing of the interview. The interviews with the principal and teachers should not last longer than 30-45 minutes. You may want to make appointments ahead of time, so you will have the amount of time you need. Be assertive but not aggressive.
12. Maintain control of the interview. Stay on the topic. Do not become stuck on one question but move on to another question as soon as the response is complete and you understand it. Follow the Interview Forms.
13. Record key words in the "Response" column. Do not write down everything the interviewee says. Write just enough to remind you of important points later on. You will probably want to write more detailed information after the interview. Record only key words in what the interviewee *says*, not your inferences.
14. Close the interview by thanking the interviewee for talking with you.

**Listening Skills**

Listening is not a passive process. It involves being physically alert, being constantly aware of your emotions, and thinking clearly.

1. Know your purpose for listening. Be thoroughly familiar with the Checklist items.
2. Concentrate on the individual or group to whom you are listening. Do not become distracted by external noises or activities. Do not think so hard about what *you* are going to do or say next that you are not paying attention to the speaker(s).
3. Listen for the meaning behind the words. Look for important ideas and try to integrate individual specific responses into themes. Try to put each thing you hear into the total context of what the person or group has said.
4. Listen with an open mind. Make sure your own views are not too rigid and your mind already made up. Remember that your purpose is to gather information.
5. Maintain eye contact with individual(s) to whom you are listening. Smile; be pleasant and relaxed.
6. These are some common barriers to effective listening:
   - evaluating what you are hearing based on your own biases.
   - interrupting the speaker(s).
   - never responding to or interacting with the speaker(s).
   - taking too many notes, doodling on paper, playing with your pen.

**Observation Skills**

1. Be thoroughly familiar with what you are looking for and why it is important.
2. Depend on all your senses — sight, hearing, smell, touch — to gather information.
3. Define the object(s) or space to be observed — one teacher, a whole classroom, a corridor, the cafeteria, a group of students — and then observe to gain a comprehensive picture of that environment.
4. Concentrate on the individual or group being observed. Do not become distracted by external noises or activities unless these distractions become a part of the environment you are observing.
5. Look beyond the surface appearance to what is really going on. For example, is the room "too" neat? Is the noise "good noise" or "bad noise"?
6. Be as unobtrusive as possible. Sit or stand quietly in an inconspicuous place. Do not draw attention to yourself. Be aware of the impact your very presence may have on the environment you are observing.
7. Mark your Observation Forms unobtrusively as you observe.

24

## C. Checklist Items and Instructions for Use

### Instructions for Using the Checklist

1. Review these Instructions, the Interview Forms, and the Observation Forms before going to the school. Be thoroughly familiar with both the content and the organization of the Checklist.
2. Study the Interview Forms which include the need, ideal situation, and questions to ask to gain understanding of *why* each question is important and what information you are seeking.
3. A team of two people from the assessment team will conduct the general interview with the principal. Another team of two will conduct the curriculum interview with the principal. Either individuals or teams can interview the guidance counselor(s). Ask the questions on the Interview Forms in the order they appear. Write down key words from each response in the Response column.
4. The other interviews may be conducted by assessment team members when you meet the appropriate people during the course of your visits, or you may choose to complete all the interviews before beginning the Observation Forms. Always ask questions in the order they appear on the Forms and write down key words from each response in the Response column.
5. Interview several teachers, students, and parents.
6. Organize your observations by the categories of the Observation Forms (Physical Facilities, Classroom Instruction, etc.).
7. Let the Observation Forms guide your visit, but do not become rigid. Flow with the normal activities of the school and try to get both specific answers for items and a general feel and understanding of the school.
8. Sometimes it may be necessary to reserve judgment on a specific item. Leave that item unmarked.
9. At times it may be helpful just to observe for a while, then go to the Observation Forms and mark several items at once based on a general and lengthy observation.
10. Before leaving the school, take a few moments to review all the Interview and Observation Forms quickly. If there are items left unanswered, mark as many as you can based on your observations. If there are items for which you need more information, circle them in pencil and return to the appropriate person or site to ask the question or to observe.
11. Soon after completing your visit, use the Summarizing Sheets (page 51) to assess and summarize your observations in preparation for the group debriefing session.

### Additional Instructions for Using the Interview Forms

The Interview Forms have two kinds of questions — *initial* questions and *follow-up* questions. The interviewee's "Yes" or "No" response to the initial question will determine what the follow-up will be. Here's an example: Turn to the Interview with the Principal, page 21, and look at Ideal #1. Note that there are several "Questions to Ask" within Ideal #1. These are the *initial* questions:

> "What is the principal's role in this school?"
>
> "Do you observe classroom instruction?"
>
> "Do you have time to make yourself available to teachers as a resource on classroom instruction?"
>
> "Is there an instructional leader in this school?"

If the interviewee answers "Yes" to the initial question, "Do you observe classroom instruction?" then the interviewer asks the *follow-up question(s)* marked **Yes**.

If the interviewee answers "No" to the initial question, then the interviewer skips all the follow-up questions marked **Yes** and asks the follow-up questions marked **No**.

Initial questions are not always followed by alternatives for both the "Yes" and "No" response. For instance, the initial question, "Is there an instructional leader in this school?" has a follow-up question marked **Yes** but no follow-up question if the answer is "No."

Some questions are followed by "Why?" "Why not?" It will usually be appropriate to ask "Why?" if the interviewee's response to the question was positive, and "Why not?" if the response was negative.

## Middle Grades Assessment Program
## Code for Needs

S = Safety

E = Academic Effectiveness

D = Diversity

SE = Self-Exploration

P = Participation

SI = Social Interaction

Phy = Physical Activity

C = Competence and Achievement

S&L = Structure and Limits

(Code appears on inside back cover for easy reference.)

## Interview with the Principal

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| E | 1. The principal is the instructional leader. | What is the principal's role in this school?<br>Do you observe classroom instruction?<br>**Yes:** How often?<br>What is the purpose of your observations?<br>Do you give teachers feedback? How?<br>Do you make concrete recommendations to teachers about ways to improve their instruction? Give an example of the kind of feedback you give.<br>Do you follow-up to see if teachers actually do improve? How?<br>**No:** Does someone else observe classroom instruction?<br>Do you have time to make yourself available to teachers as a resource on classroom instruction?<br>Is there an instructional leader in this school?<br>**Yes:** Who is it? | |
| E | 2. Staff are open to change and utilize their freedom to experiment with new approaches to teaching. | Do teachers introduce and use new teaching techniques? How often?<br>Do *you* introduce and use new teaching techniques? How often?<br>Do you receive training on new techniques?<br>Do you offer similar training for teachers?<br>How do teachers respond when new ideas and techniques are suggested and tried? | |
| E | 3. The staff development program includes the study of early adolescent development, is inseparable from curriculum development, and is on-site and ongoing. | Does this school or district conduct an on-going staff development program?<br>**Yes:** How many teachers have participated in the staff development program this year?<br>What topics or areas are included in the staff development program this year?<br>How much time is spent on studying and understanding normal adolescent development?<br>How are topics chosen?<br>Do the topics relate to current goals and to curriculum development? How?<br>**No:** Do you think your staff would benefit from an on-going staff development program? Why? Why not? | |

## Interview with the Principal

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| E | 4. The principal defines the decision-making process, which includes opportunities for input from the staff. Staff focus on "what can we do?" rather than "nothing can be done" when problems arise and decisions have to be made. | How do you see your responsibility in decision making at this school?<br>Suppose you were considering making major scheduling changes for next year: who would be involved in making that decision? Who determines who is going to be involved? What process would you use in making the decision?<br>Again, suppose you have a situation like this: suddenly, the school has a problem with theft. The personal property of students and teachers, as well as school property, is being stolen at an alarming rate. Who would be involved in deciding what to do? Who would determine who was to be involved? How would you decide what to do? | |
| P | 5. There is an established mechanism through which students have meaningful input in decision making. | Do students have a voice in making decisions, such as establishing rules and recommending courses or activities to be offered?<br>**Yes:** How do students participate in the decision making? What do they *do*?<br>Do students care what happens around here?<br>**Yes:** How do they show that they care?<br>**No:** In your opinion, why do they *not* care? | |
| S&L | 6. There is an approach to discipline that is accepted by the school as a whole. Each teacher does not have his/her own unique approaches or methods in isolation from the school as a whole. Discipline is viewed as a part of the curriculum, not as a waste of time. Rules are seen as "how we do things here" rather than as a restrictive and prescriptive set of "don'ts." | What are the three most important rules?<br>How would you describe this school's approach to discipline?<br>How do the students learn the rules here?<br>Do people frequently break rules here?<br>**Yes:** Why do you think they break the rules?<br>**No:** Why do you think they do not break the rules frequently?<br>What usually happens when a minor rule is broken?<br>What happens when a major rule is broken?<br>Suppose an important rule were broken by a student and a teacher ignored the incident: what would happen?<br>Suppose a teacher's discipline is very harsh in comparison with the tone set by the school: what would happen?<br>How often do situations like the previous two occur here?<br>What strategies are used other than punishment? | |

## Interview with the Principal

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| D | 7. The school recognizes that different students need varying degrees of structure and functions accordingly. | Are there ways in which this school recognizes that different students need varying degrees of structure?<br>**Yes:** Please give two specific examples.<br>**No:** Why not? | |
| P | 8. Students are encouraged to initiate ideas and activities. All staff *expect* positive student initiative and structure opportunities for students to express, evaluate, and try out ideas. | Can you give me one or two specific examples of situations where students have had an idea and staff have helped them evaluate and try out the idea?<br>Do you think the staff members encourage students to initiate and follow through on ideas and activities? | |
| SI | 9. The school actively encourages improved race relations and racial understanding. | What does the school do to promote racial understanding and improved race relations? Please give specific activities or approaches.<br>How are racial incidents, such as a student using derogatory slang expressions to a student of another race, dealt with? Do students report such incidents? | |
| P | 10. Parents are meaningfully involved in the life of the school and in their children's learning. | Is there an established mechanism for parents to be involved in the school?<br>**Yes:** What is it?<br>In your opinion, how well does it work?<br>Do you have a volunteer program?<br>**Yes:** What do volunteers do? How many parents serve as volunteers?<br>Do you have a parent-teacher organization?<br>**Yes:** What is the percentage of parents who come to the parent-teacher organization meetings?<br>What does the PTA or the PTO do?<br>Do teachers initiate contact with parents on positive issues as well as problems? How often?<br>What does the school do to involve parents in their children's learning?<br>Are there other ways in which the school and parents work together? | |

## Interview with the Principal

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| P | 11. Guidelines exist that encourage the involvement of community resources, such as other agencies and individuals, in the life of the school. People from the community are involved in the school program in a variety of ways, such as serving as volunteer guest speakers and having students visit their businesses. | Do teachers use invited speakers or activity leaders from the community as resources in their classes? How often?<br>Do teachers take students on field trips to community businesses and organizations?<br>Are there guidelines which encourage or discourage these practices?<br>What are the barriers to teachers using speakers and field trips?<br>What is the policy regarding referral and coordination with other agencies such as social services, juvenile court, Boys' and Girls Clubs, 4-H, etc.? | |
| E | 12. There is a generally accepted school philosophy. | What is the purpose of this school?<br>What are the two most important things it stands for? | |
| P | 13. Staff, parents, and students are constantly engaged in study, evaluation, and planning of the school program. | Is there an ongoing process for study, evaluation, and planning for this school?<br>**Yes:** Describe it.<br>Who is involved?<br>What changes have occurred over the past two years as a result of this process?<br>**No:** Do you think such a process would be helpful to the school?<br>Who would be involved?<br>What are the barriers to such an evaluation and planning process? | |
| S | 14. Staff and students do not fear for their physical or emotional safety. | Do staff fear for their safety here?<br>Do students fear for their physical safety?<br>Can teachers express ideas, concerns, and beliefs without being embarrassed or ridiculed by other staff members?<br>Can students express ideas, concerns, and beliefs without being embarrassed or ridiculed by staff members? | |
| C | 15. Out-of-school suspension rate is low. | How many students did you suspend last month?<br>Was that typical?<br>For what reasons do you suspend students? | |

## Interview with the Principal

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| S | 16. Amount of money spent on vandalism repair is low. | How much money did you spend on vandalism repair last year?<br>Was that typical?<br>Do you have a plan to reduce vandalism?<br>**Yes:** What is it?<br>**No:** Have you considered formulating such a plan? Why? Why not? | |
| C | 17. Parents, students, and school staff like the school. They also have ideas about how to improve the school. | Do you like this school? Please explain.<br>Are you satisfied with the students' progress in this school? Please explain.<br>What are you most proud of?<br>In what two areas do you see the most need for change?<br>How can we as an assessment team help? | |

## Interview with the Principal About Curriculum

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| D | 1. The schedule is flexible, including some block scheduling. | Explain the daily and weekly schedule.<br>Does the schedule include some block time?<br>Would you say the schedule is flexible, rigid, or somewhere in between? Please explain. | |
| D | 2. The curriculum is a combination of fundamental or basic skills, exploratory classes, and activities. | **Ask to see several samples of actual students' schedules. Ask the principal to explain the schedules using the following questions:**<br>For an average student, how many hours each week are spent in the following classes?<br>Language Arts _____<br>Math _____<br>Science _____<br>Social Studies _____<br>What other classes are required of all students? How many hours a week does the average student spend in each?<br>What classes does the student choose for him/herself from among non-required optional courses? How many hours a week does he/she spend in these?<br>Are activities such as clubs and intramurals a part of the regularly scheduled curriculum?<br>**Yes:** How many hours a week?<br>For what length of time do students remain in the same classes (e.g., whole year, semester, six weeks, etc.). | |
| D | 3. Curriculum and instruction are interdisciplinary. Teachers are not assigned to departments only. | Are teachers assigned to departments?<br>Are teachers assigned to interdisciplinary teams?<br>How often do teachers plan and teach units together? | |
| SI | 4. Teachers of the same students have joint planning time. | Are students assigned to teams of teachers?<br>Do teachers of the same students have joint planning time?<br>**Yes:** How often?<br>What do they do during the joint planning time? | |

## Interview with the Principal About Curriculum

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| E | 5. The school is academically effective. Students from various racial and socio-economic groups are progressing at similar rates. | Are standardized tests given to all students?<br>What tests are used?<br>What were the reading and math scores last year and the year before for the students as a whole? (Scores may be given in percentile rankings or grade equivalents. See Glossary for definitions and references on interpreting test scores.)<br>What were the scores for white students?<br>What were the scores for nonwhite students? Specify groups such as Blacks, Indians, Hispanics, Asians.<br>How do these scores compare with scores over the past two or three years?<br>Are you satisfied with these scores?<br>**Yes:** Why?<br>**No:** What is being done to improve scores? | |
| E | 6. Staff have positive expectations of all students. They believe all children can learn. | Are the various racial and socio-economic groups of students in this school progressing at similar rates?<br>**Yes:** What is there about this school that makes this happen?<br>**No:** In your opinion, why aren't they? Is there a plan of action for accomplishing this? | |
| C | 7. Teachers use frequent testing or checking of student work to diagnose the students' strengths and weaknesses. This diagnosis, not only a prescribed curriculum, directs instruction. | How are standardized test score results used in planning the curriculum?<br>How do teachers diagnose individual student's strengths and weaknesses?<br>How are test scores and other information on a student's strengths and weaknesses used in planning for the student? Please give two examples.<br>What happens with a student who is *not* succeeding? | |
| C | 8. Teaching of reading skills is integrated into the curriculum. | Are reading skills taught as a part of the curriculum?<br>**Yes:** To which students?<br>Who teaches reading skills? | |
| C | 9. Help is available for students with special learning needs, but they are not segregated from other students for the whole day. | Is help available for students with special learning needs?<br>**Yes:** Describe the program.<br>For what proportion of the day are these students in special classes?<br>For what proportion of the day are they in regular classes? | |

## Interview with the Principal About Curriculum

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| C | 10. Student grouping is based on student productivity, ability, achievement, maturity, and interests. Groups are short-term and flexible, with students being reassessed and regrouped frequently. | On what basis are decisions made about grouping students?<br>How often are students reassessed and regrouped? | |
| SE | 11. A wide variety of special interest courses is taught as a part of the regular curriculum. These may be called interest, exploratory, elective, or mini-courses. The purpose is for students to be exposed to an area in which they have a special interest or ability, not necessarily to master the subject matter. | Are exploratory or interest courses a part of the regular curriculum?<br>**Yes:** What are some of the topics of those classes being taught now?<br>What is the purpose of these courses?<br>Is the emphasis in these courses on the students' mastering the subject matter or on their exploration of an area in which they have a special interest or ability? | |
| SE | 12. Students select the special interest courses they will take, with consultation from parents and staff. The great majority of special interest classes are open to all students. | How is the decision made as to what exploratory or interest courses a particular student will take?<br>Are all exploratory or interest courses open to all students?<br>**No:** Which ones are not open to all students?<br>Why aren't they? | |
| P | 13. Students help develop the topics and the content for some special interest courses. | How are the topics for the exploratory or interest courses chosen?<br>Do the students help develop the courses?<br>What would you do if a group of students came to you with a request for an exploratory or interest class? Has this ever happened? | |
| D | 14. The special interest courses that are offered vary over time. Last year's schedule will not contain only the same topics as this year's. | Is this year's schedule of exploratory or interest classes the same as last year's?<br>**Yes:** Is this usually true?<br>**No:** How is it different?<br>Please be specific. | |
| D | 15. A wide variety of clubs and activity groups meet during regular school hours. | Does this school have student clubs or activity groups?<br>**Yes:** When do they meet?<br>Name some of the clubs and activity groups.<br>**No:** Would you like to have such clubs and groups? What are the barriers? | |

## Interview with the Principal About Curriculum

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| P | 16. Clubs and activity groups are open to all students and there is a high level of participation. | Are all clubs open to all students?<br>**Yes:** How are decisions made about which students join which clubs?<br>**No:** Who decides which students can join?<br>On what basis are these decisions made?<br>What percentage of students actually participate in clubs and activities? | |
| P | 17. Clubs and activity groups are largely controlled by students, with adults serving as facilitators and guides. | What roles do students play in controlling and structuring clubs and activities?<br>What roles do adults play? | |
| C | 18. Vocational education and home economics classes are a part of the regular curriculum. They emphasize skills needed for greater self-sufficiency, such as budgeting money, cooking, job hunting, and job exploration. | Do you offer vocational education and home economics for both boys and girls?<br>Are these courses required for all students?<br>What do you see as the purpose of these classes?<br>What skills do students learn in these classes? | |
| SE | 19. Art, music, and drama are a part of the regular curriculum. | Are all students required to take art? music? drama?<br>**Yes:** How often and for what length of time?<br>**No:** Have you considered making these classes requirements? What are the barriers? | |
| D | 20. A wide variety of art, music, and drama classes is offered. | What art classes are offered?<br>What music classes are offered?<br>What drama classes are offered? | |
| SE | 21. Self-expression and mastery of basic techniques are emphasized in the art, music, and drama classes. | What is the purpose of art, music, and drama classes in the curriculum? | |
| Phy | 22. The physical education program recognizes the wide range of normal physical development among young adolescents and reflects understanding of the concerns of young adolescents about their physical development. | What do you think students in this age group need most from a health and physical education program?<br>Does the health program include the following: nutrition? drug and alcohol education? helping students understand normal adolescent growth and development? | |

## Interview with the Principal About Curriculum

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| Phy | 23. Physical education classes emphasize body coordination, basic skills, lifelong sports, and noncompetitive sports. | What do students learn in physical education classes?<br>What specific sports or activities are taught? | |
| SE | 24. A comprehensive sex education program is offered. It focuses on normal early adolescent development and sexuality. | Does this school offer a sex education or family life education program?<br>**Yes:** What is the purpose of the program?<br>What major topics are included?<br>What proportion of the students participate in the program?<br>**No:** Why not?<br>What are the barriers? | |
| P | 25. An extensive intramural program is offered and is open to all students. A high percentage of students participate. Participation, not competition, is emphasized. | Is there an intramural program?<br>Is it open to all students?<br>What percentage of the students participate?<br>What is the purpose of the intramural program? | |
| D | 26. The intramural program includes a wide variety of activities requiring a variety of skills. Not all activities are athletic. | What activities are included in the intramural program? | |
| SE | 27. Materials on minorities are an important part of the curriculum for all students. | Are materials on various racial and ethnic groups such as Blacks, Indians, and Hispanics included in the curriculum?<br>**Yes:** How do teachers use them?<br>Please give specific examples. | |
| P | 28. Students make contributions to the school curriculum by doing things like constructing nature trails and model villages or teaching exploratory and activity classes. | Do students make contributions to the curriculum by doing things like producing learning materials and leading classes?<br>**Yes:** Please give specific examples. | |
| P | 29. The school provides service-learning opportunities for students, such as visiting a rest home, teaching at a day care center, and cleaning up a local park. These activities are designed to enhance and supplement classroom learning, to foster meaningful participation in the community, and to encourage self-exploration. | Does the school provide structured opportunities for students to learn through community service activities and to relate their service activities to what they are learning in class?<br>**Yes:** Describe the program. What is the purpose of the program?<br>**No:** Have you ever thought about doing this?<br>What would be the value of service activities for your students?<br>What are the barriers to doing this? | |

## Interview with Teacher

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| C | 1. Teachers enjoy teaching young adolescents and exhibit understanding and sensitivity to the needs of the age group. | Will you briefly describe *your* approach to teaching this age group?<br>What do you think are the three most important needs of students in this age group?<br>Do you enjoy teaching this age group or would you prefer to teach another age group? Why? | |
| E | 2. Teachers have positive expectations of all students. They believe all children can learn. | Do you think various racial and socio-economic groups of students in this school are progressing at similar rates?<br>**Yes:** What is there about this school which makes that happen?<br>**No:** In your opinion, why aren't they? Is there a plan of action for accomplishing this? | |
| E | 3. Staff are open to change and utilize their freedom to experiment with new approaches to teaching. | Are you trying new ideas or teaching strategies this school year?<br>**Yes:** How is this different from what you were doing before?<br>Is trying new teaching strategies encouraged in this school? By whom?<br>Is trying new teaching strategies discouraged in this school? By whom?<br>What are the sources of new ideas and techniques?<br>Do you receive training on new techniques?<br>**Yes:** From whom?<br>Who on this school's staff provides new ideas on teaching techniques? | |
| C | 4. Teachers try to understand the "whole child" and engage in joint problem solving. | Suppose you had a child in one class who did average work and got along with the students well for the first two months of school. Then over a period of three weeks he became increasingly disinterested in his work, failed two major tests, distracted other students from their work, and seemed moody around both you and other students. What would you do?<br>Would you discuss the problem with other staff members?<br>**Yes:** With whom?<br>What would be the purpose of discussing the situation with others?<br>Would you discuss the situation with anyone else?<br>**Yes:** With whom?<br>What would be the purpose of discussing the situation with others?<br>Are there regularly scheduled opportunities for teachers of the same students to share information and engage in joint problem solving? | |

## Interview with Teacher

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| C | 5. The grade report form includes meaningful narrative comments by teachers. | Do you write narrative comments on individual students' report forms?<br>**Yes:** What is the purpose of doing this?<br>What kinds of things do you write?<br>How often do you make positive comments? | |
| E | 6. The staff development program includes the study of early adolescent development, is inseparable from curriculum development, and is on-site and on-going. | Describe the staff development program for this school or district.<br>What staff development opportunities have you participated in over the past year?<br>For those staff development activities in which you participated:<br>What topics were covered?<br>Was normal adolescent development included?<br>Did the topics relate to current school goals?<br>Did the topics relate to curriculum development?<br>How would you rate the staff development activities in their helpfulness to you? | |
| E | 7. The principal is the instructional leader. | What do you see as the principal's role here?<br>Does the principal or a member of the administrative staff visit your classroom to observe instruction?<br>**Yes:** How often?<br>Do they give you feedback on your instruction?<br>Do they make concrete recommendations to you on ways to improve your instruction?<br>**Yes:** Are the recommendations helpful?<br>Do they follow up to see if you tried their recommendations and whether or not the recommendations worked for you?<br>Is there an instructional leader in this school?<br>**Yes:** Who is it? | |
| E | 8. The principal rewards good teaching with praise and recognition. | Is good teaching rewarded by the principal?<br>**Yes:** How?<br>**No:** Is good teaching rewarded by someone other than the principal? Who? | |

## Interview with Teacher

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| E | 9. The principal defines the decision-making process, which includes opportunities for input by staff. Staff focus on "what can we do?" rather than "nothing can be done" when problems arise or decisions have to be made. | How do you see the principal's responsibility in decision making at this school?<br>How do you see the teachers' responsibility in decision making?<br>Suppose the principal were considering making major scheduling changes for next year: who would be involved in making that decision? Who would determine who was going to be involved? What *process* would be used in making the decision?<br>Again, suppose you have a situation like this: suddenly the school has a problem with theft. The personal property of students and staff as well as school property is being stolen at an alarming rate. Who would be involved in deciding what to do? Who would determine who was going to be involved? *How* would the decision be made? | |
| S&L | 10. There is an approach to discipline that is accepted by the school as a whole. Each teacher does not have his/her own unique approaches or methods in isolation from the school as a whole. Discipline is viewed by teachers as a part of the curriculum, not as a waste of their time. Rules are seen as "how we do things here" rather than a restrictive and prescriptive set of "don'ts." Teachers talk about teaching appropriate behavior and responsibility rather than punishment. | How would you describe this school's approach to discipline?<br>What are the three most important rules here?<br>How do students learn the rules?<br>Do people frequently break the rules?<br>**Yes:** Why is that?<br>**No:** Why not?<br>What usually happens when a minor rule is broken?<br>What usually happens when a major rule is broken?<br>Suppose an important rule were broken by a student and a teacher ignored the incident: what would happen?<br>Suppose a teacher's discipline is very harsh in comparison to the tone set by the school: what would happen?<br>How often do situations like the previous two occur here?<br>What strategies are used other than punishment? | |
| S | 11. Staff and students do not fear for their physical or emotional safety. | Do you fear for your physical safety here?<br>Do you feel that you can express ideas, concerns, and beliefs without being embarrassed or ridiculed by other staff members? | |

## Interview with Teacher

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| D | 12. Teachers have opportunities to do things they truly enjoy outside their area of academic expertise, for example, teach cross-stitching, coach a current events team. | Do you have opportunities to share your hobbies and interests with students?<br>**Yes:** How?<br>**No:** Would you like to have such opportunities?<br>Do you have opportunities at this school to do at least one thing, other than teach your regular classes, that you really enjoy and are good at?<br>**Yes:** Describe what you do.<br>**No:** Would you like to have such opportunities? | |
| SI | 13. Students and teachers have opportunities for positive social interaction outside of the classroom. | What opportunities do you have to talk and be with students on a positive, informal social basis at school, but outside the classroom?<br>Is there some structured mechanism that allows a staff member to spend time with a small group of students in non-instructional activities and to develop close and supportive relationships?<br>**Yes:** How is it structured?<br>Do you think most students have at least one staff member with whom they can discuss personal concerns and problems?<br>What happens to the student who does not have a close relationship with at least one adult? | |
| E | 14. There is a generally accepted school philosophy. | What is the purpose of this school?<br>What are the two most important things the school stands for? | |
| C | 15. Parents, students, and school staff like the school. They also have ideas about how to improve the school. | Do you like this school? Please explain.<br>Are you satisfied with the students' progress in this school?<br>In what two areas do you see the most need for change?<br>How can we as an assessment team help this school? | |

## Interview with the Guidance Counselor

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| SE | 1. The concerns and developmental needs and characteristics of young adolescents are evident in the stated purpose and services of the guidance program. | What is the purpose of the guidance program here? | |
| SI | 2. Every student has a close and supportive relationship with at least one staff member. There is a structured mechanism for accomplishing this ideal. | Is there some structured mechanism, such as an advisor-advisee program, that allows a staff member to spend time with a small group of students in noninstructional activities?<br>**Yes:** How is it structured?<br>**No:** Have you thought about having such a program?<br>What are the barriers to having such a program?<br>Do you think most students have at least one staff member with whom they can discuss personal concerns and problems?<br>What happens to the student who does not have a close relationship with at least one adult? | |
| SI | 3. Guidance is seen as a shared responsibility. The guidance counselor spends a large proportion of his/her time training teachers and other staff to facilitate close and supportive relationships with students and insuring that teachers of the same students systematically share information about individual students. | Is student guidance seen as your responsibility or a shared responsibility among all staff?<br>What is the teacher's role in guidance? the administrative staff's role? the support staff's role?<br>What proportion of your time would you estimate is spent on the following types of activities? Training teachers and other staff to facilitate close and supportive relationships with individuals and groups of students _____<br>Assisting or guiding teachers of the same students to share information about individual students _____<br>Working with individual students _____<br>Working with small groups of students _____<br>Doing administrative tasks _____<br>Other (please specify) _____ | |
| SE | 4. The guidance program is accessible to all students, not just those in trouble. The program focuses on self-understanding and personal development. | What proportion of your contact with students is related to each of the following areas? Some problem the student is having _____<br>Routine educational counseling _____<br>Career exploration _____<br>Self-understanding and personal development _____ | |

## Interview with the Guidance Counselor

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| SE | 5. The guidance program includes small groups in which students can discuss their unique concerns. | Does the guidance program include small group sessions on topics such as the following: what it means to be a young adolescent, divorce, or going to senior high school? | |
| SE | 6. Career education focuses on exploration of what different occupations are like and includes visits to (or by) people who are working in the occupations being studied. It focuses on exploration of students' strengths, weaknesses, interests, likes, and dislikes in relation to the occupations being studied. Boys and girls are encouraged to explore a wide range of careers with no evidence of sex stereotyping. | Do you have a career education program?<br>**Yes:** What is its purpose?<br>What topics and activities are included in it?<br>**No:** Why not?<br>Would you like to have a career education program?<br>Do students have opportunities to visit people in the community who work in various occupations? | |
| SI | 7. The school actively encourages improved race relations and multiracial understanding. | What does the school *do* to promote racial understanding and improved race relations? Please give specific activities or approaches.<br>Are racial incidents, such as a student using derogatory slang expressions to a student of another race, dealt with?<br>**Yes:** How?<br>Do students report such incidents? | |
| | 8. | What are you most proud of in the guidance program of this school?<br>What would you like to see happening in the guidance program that is not currently happening? | |

## Interview with Student

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| SI | 1. Students know and talk to staff members other than their teachers. | What is the principal's name?<br>Does he/she know your name?<br>Do you ever talk to him/her?<br>**Yes:** What kinds of things do you talk about?<br>**No:** Why not?<br>**Ask the same questions about the janitors, cafeteria workers, secretaries, etc.** | |
| SI | 2. Every student has a close and supportive relationship with at least one staff member. | Is there an adult here at school whom you talk to when you want advice on classes? when you want advice on career or educational plans? when you want advice or just someone to talk to about personal concerns and problems?<br>Do you think this statement is True or False: Almost every student at this school has at least one adult staff member with whom he/she has a close and supportive relationship. | |
| S&L | 3. There is an approach to discipline that is accepted by the school as a whole. Rules are seen as "how we do things here" rather than a restrictive and prescriptive set of "don'ts." Students perceive the rules and limits to be reasonable and fair. | What are the three most important school rules?<br>How do students learn the rules?<br>Do people frequently break the rules here?<br>**Yes:** Why is that?<br>**No:** Why not?<br>What happens when one of the three most important rules is broken?<br>What happens when a less important rule is broken?<br>Why do students break rules here?<br>Do all teachers have basically the same rules?<br>Do you think the rules themselves are fair and reasonable?<br>**Yes:** Why?<br>**No:** Why not?<br>Are the rules enforced evenly and fairly among all students? | |

## Interview with Student

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| P | 4. There is an established mechanism through which students are meaningfully involved in decision making. | Do students have a voice in making decisions and establishing rules in this school?<br>**Yes:** How does that happen?<br>If an individual or group of students wants to change something here, like a rule or one part of the schedule, is there a way to do that?<br>**Yes:** Please describe it.<br>Do students actually do this?<br>How often?<br>What are the results?<br>Can you give me one example of something that has been changed as a result of this process?<br>**No:** Then what do you do when you want something changed? | |
| S | 5. Staff and students do not fear for their physical and emotional safety. | Are you willing to walk alone in the halls?<br>Are you willing to go into the bathrooms?<br>Do you worry a lot about getting beaten up, having things stolen from you, or being harmed by someone else here at school? Explain why or why not.<br>Do you feel that you can express your ideas, concerns, and questions without being ridiculed or embarassed by someone else here at school? Why or why not?<br>How much do you think adults here care about you? | |
| C | 6. All students have an opportunity for success at something. | What is something that you are especially good at?<br>How often do you get to do that in this school?<br>Is there something else you are especially good at that you get to do at school? | |
| SE | 7. There are opportunities within the regular curriculum for students to pursue questions and topics that interest them personally. | Do you have opportunities here at school to explore topics or questions that interest you personally?<br>**Yes:** Please give an example.<br>Do you get to suggest or select topics or questions for study that interest you personally?<br>**Yes:** Please give an example.<br>**No:** Would you like to have that opportunity?<br>What would you do at this school if there were some topic you wanted to learn more about, like building a motor or making a pizza? | |

## Interview with Student

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| SE | 8. Students are encouraged to think for themselves. Imagination and questioning are expected and encouraged. | Are you encouraged to ask a lot of questions?<br>Are you encouraged to write papers or essays on what *you think* about a topic you are studying?<br>Are people here interested in what you think?<br>**Yes:** How do they show their interest?<br>**No:** Would you like them to be interested? Why or why not?<br>Would you say that imagination is rewarded or discouraged by teachers? Please explain. | |
| C | 9. Students are not overly anxious about grades. They talk more about learning and understanding than about grades. | How are your grades determined?<br>Do you think the grades given are usually fair?<br>What is the purpose of grades?<br>Are you satisfied with the grades you are currently getting?<br>Is the course work hard, easy, or just right for you?<br>Do you worry a lot about your grades?<br>**Yes:** What do you worry about? | |
| C | 10. The grade report form includes meaningful narrative comments by teachers. | Do teachers write comments on your report (card) form?<br>**Yes:** Do you learn from the comments?<br>Do teachers ever talk to you about your progress? | |
| C | 11. Students have opportunities to evaluate their own work with the guidance of teachers. | Do you ever have the chance to evaluate your own work and tell your teachers what grade you think you should get or what kind of progress you think you are making?<br>**Yes:** How often?<br>Do you and the teacher usually agree or disagree on your grade or amount of progress?<br>**No:** Would you like to have that chance? Why or why not? | |

## Interview with Student

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| P | 12. Students participate in parent-teacher-student conferences. | Are there conferences between your teachers and your parents?<br>**Yes:** Are the conferences held regularly or just when there is a problem?<br>Do you attend parent-teacher conferences?<br>**Yes:** What do *you* do at the conference?<br>What does your teacher do?<br>What do your parents do?<br>Are the conferences helpful to you?<br>**No:** Would you like to attend parent-teacher conferences? | |
| SE | 13. Materials on minorities are an important part of the curriculum for all students. | Does this school do anything to observe events that are special for minorities in our society like Black Awareness Week?<br>**Yes:** What events are observed?<br>What happens during the observances?<br>Do you think it is important to do this? Why or why not? | |
| E | 14. There is a generally accepted school philosophy. | What is the purpose of this school?<br>What are the two most important things the school stands for? | |
| C | 15. Parents, students, and school staff like the school. They also have ideas about how to improve the school. | Do you like this school? Why or why not?<br>What is the best thing about this school?<br>What changes would you like to see at this school?<br>How can those changes be made?<br>Who do you think is responsible for making those changes? | |

## Interview with Parent

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| C | 1. Parents and students like the school. | Does your child like and enjoy this school? Why or why not?<br>Do you like this school? Why or why not?<br>Do you think your child is learning "the basics"?<br>Is he/she learning to think?<br>Is he/she learning that school and learning can be enjoyable as well as hard work? | |
| E | 2. There is a generally accepted school philosophy. | What is the purpose of this school?<br>What are the two most important things this school stands for? | |
| P | 3. Parents are meaningfully involved in educational decision making and in their children's learning. | Who makes decisions about the school program?<br>Do you have a chance to say what you want the school to do?<br>Who makes decisions about *your child's* educational program and learning? What say do you have?<br>Do you have as many opportunities for meaningful participation in your child's education as you would like?<br>**Yes:** In what ways do you participate?<br>**No:** In what ways would you like to participate?<br>Does the school encourage or discourage your participation? How?<br>What is the policy regarding parents visiting the school?<br>Does the school have a parent-teacher organization?<br>**Yes:** Do you know what activities it conducts?<br>**No:** Do you know why not?<br>Are parents encouraged to volunteer?<br>Do you volunteer?<br>**Yes:** What do you do? | |

## Interview with Parent

| Need | Ideal | Questions to Ask | Response |
|---|---|---|---|
| C | 4. There is open and frequent communication between the school and the parent. | How many times have you talked with someone from the school this year about your child?<br>How often do you have conferences with your child's teachers?<br>Are the conferences scheduled at convenient times for you?<br>Do you have to take time off from work to attend conferences?<br>Has your child been present at teacher-parent conferences?<br>**Yes:** Do you think he/she benefits from being there?<br>What does he/she do at the conference?<br>What do you do?<br>What does the teacher do?<br>**No:** Would you *like* him/her to be there? Why or why not?<br>Do teachers initiate contact with you on positive issues as well as problems?<br>**Yes:** How often?<br>Do teachers write narrative comments on the child's report forms?<br>**Yes:** Do the comments help you to better understand what is going on with your child at school? | |
| D | 5. The curriculum is a combination of "basic skills," special interest classes, and activities. | Do you think the curriculum of the school is diverse enough to meet your child's needs, interests, and abilities?<br>**No:** What needs to be added? | |
| C | 6. Parents, students, and school staff like the school. They also have ideas about how to improve the school. | Are you satisfied with your child's progress in this school? Please explain.<br>What would you like to change about the school?<br>What can we as an assessment team do to help improve the school? | |

## Observation Form

| | PHYSICAL FACILITIES | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|---|
| C | 1. Building is neat, clean, and in good repair. There are few, if any, signs of vandalism or graffiti. | | |
| P | 2. Student work is displayed on bulletin boards, walls, tables in classes and other areas throughout the building. | | |
| SE | 3. Pictures and displays depict various racial and ethnic groups. | | |
| SE | 4. Pictures, posters, and displays show both boys and girls engaged in a wide variety of activities, for example: girls as doctors, policewomen, construction workers; boys as nurses, social workers, secretaries; girls playing baseball and boys cooking. | | |
| P | 5. Announcements are posted by students and staff about activities and concerns. | | |
| D | 6. The building itself is flexible, including some large open spaces, some small rooms. Some spaces are multifunctional. | | |
| D | 7. Furniture throughout the school is movable. | | |
| SE | 8. There are quiet places for individuals, pairs, and groups of students to withdraw, relax, and think, such as student lounges or reading lofts. | | |
| Phy | 9. There are identified places where students can be noisy and engage in physical activity. | | |
| Phy | 10. There is plenty of room in corridors and classrooms for movement from one place to another. | | |
| D | 11. There is outdoor space for projects such as science gardens and building projects. It is being used. | | |
| P | 12. Students contribute to the upkeep and appearance of the school. For example, they may build furniture, clean their own tables in the cafeteria, pick up trash, decorate bulletin boards. | | |
| SE | 13. There are doors or curtains on the stalls in the bathrooms and dressing rooms. | | |

COMMENTS:

## Observation Form

| Need | CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION (Observe several classrooms) | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Teacher Behavior** | | |
| SI | 14. Teacher greets students as they enter classroom. | | |
| SI | 15. Teacher calls students by their names. | | |
| S&L | 16. Teacher gives clear, concise instructions and adjusts instructions or assignments if students don't know what to do or act confused. | | |
| S&L | 17. Teacher makes smooth, quick, clear transitions from one activity to another. | | |
| SI | 18. Teacher encourages students to ask questions of each other as well as of the teacher. | | |
| SI | 19. Teacher builds on students' comments and ideas. | | |
| SI | 20. Teacher encourages students to talk to each other. All conversation in the classroom is not directed to the teacher. | | |
| C | 21. Teacher frequently praises students, using specific praise of identified behavior, for example: "Mary, your essay shows a keen understanding of this poem." Not: "Mary, you've been good today." | | |
| C | 22. Teacher praise and rewards go to a high percentage of the students and are evenly distributed among all students. | | |
| SI | 23. Teacher moves about the classroom interacting with individuals and groups. | | |
| SI | 24. Teacher *listens* carefully to students and responds to both the content and feeling of what is said. | | |
| C | 25. Teacher's attention (calling on students, working with individuals or small groups, etc.) is evenly distributed among all students. | | |
| C | 26. Teacher makes references to topics the class has studied previously. | | |
| C | 27. Teacher makes references to what is going on in the students' other classes. | | |
| C | 28. Teacher *does not* frequently use references to tests and grades in attempts to control or motivate students, for example: "Be quiet and listen because this will probably be on the test" or "You need to work hard on this project because it will be an important part of your grade." | | |

COMMENTS:

50

## Observation Form

| | | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Student Behavior** | | |
| SI | 29. Interracial groupings of students are present in the classroom. | | |
| D | 30. Students are often actively engaged in activities, manipulating materials and objects. They are not just listening. | | |
| Phy | 31. Students have some opportunities to move around, to shift positions, to squirm. | | |
| P | 32. Students are involved, paying attention, and participating. | | |
| P | 33. Students' facial expressions and body posture reflect alertness and interest. | | |
| C | 34. Students carry on with assigned activities when the teacher leaves the room. | | |
| C | 35. Students make references to topics the class has studied previously. | | |
| S&L | 36. Students understand the objectives of lessons and activities and make connections between class activities, objectives, and life outside the classroom. Ask students:<br>What are you doing?<br>Why are you doing this activity?<br>Why is it important to know . . .<br>(whatever is being studied, for example, prime numbers)? | | |
| | **Facilities** | | |
| S! | 37. Seating arrangements vary, including small groups, pairs, individuals, and total group. | | |
| D | 38. Plants, pictures, displays, and equipment are used to reflect the teacher's and students' personalities. | | |
| C | 39. Student work is displayed throughout the room. Not all of it is "A" or excellent work. | | |

COMMENTS:

## Observation Form

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Learning Activities** | | |
| S&L | 40. A high percentage of time in the classroom is spent on learning activities. Minimal time is spent giving instructions, arranging for equipment, passing out papers. Instruction is rarely interrupted by disciplinary acts or loudspeaker announcements. | | |
| D | 41. In many classrooms, individual students and small groups choose from among alternative learning activities. | | |
| SI | 42. In many classrooms, small groups of students are working independently on projects or assignments. | | |
| SE | 43. Classroom activities relate to the real life situation of students. Students and teachers discuss personal concerns such as the future, their families, their community. | | |
| C | 44. If service-learning opportunities are a part of the curriculum, students and teachers relate what students are learning in class to what they are learning through service to the community. | | |
| P | 45. People from the community serve as guest speakers or activity leaders in classrooms. | | |
| P | 46. Students and teachers relate what they are learning in class to field trips or visits into the community that they are planning or have completed. | | |
| D | 47. A wide variety of learning materials is used in the classroom: books, magazines, newspapers, audio and video tapes, cassettes, records, films and filmstrips, simulation games, maps, pictures, teacher-made and student-made materials. | | |
| D | 48. A wide variety of teaching methods is used by teachers: small group work, media, lecturing, programmed learning, worksheets, field trips. | | |
| SE | 49. Learning materials and actual teaching represent various racial and ethnic groups in an honest and sensitive manner. | | |
| | **PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES** | | |
| P | 50. All students are participating in activities. | | |
| C | 51. Instruction is taking place and activities are purposeful. | | |
| Phy | 52. Body coordination, basic skills, lifelong sports, and noncompetitive sports are emphasized. | | |

COMMENTS:

## Observation Form

| | MEDIA CENTER OR LIBRARY | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|---|
| C | 53. Many students (both individuals and classes) are using the media center or library most of the time. | | |
| D | 54. The media center or library has areas for group and individual study, relaxation areas, carrels, and interest centers. | | |
| D | 55. The media center or library contains a wide variety of print and nonprint materials. | | |
| C | 56. Students have direct access to most materials in the media center or library. They do not have to ask the staff to get most materials for them. | | |
| C | 57. Books and materials are frequently checked out. Look at the last check-out date stamped on several different kinds of books. | | |
| SE | 58. Periodicals in the media center or library reflect a wide variety of personal interests and hobbies, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and young adolescent concerns. | | |
| | Ask the librarian or staff member in charge of the media center or library: | | |
| C | 59. Do the displays in the media center reflect what some classes are currently studying?<br>**Yes:** How? Which ones? Do you usually coordinate your displays with what classes are studying? Give me an example, please. How often do you do this?<br>**No:** Do you ever coordinate your displays with what particular classes are studying? Have you ever thought about doing that? | | |
| D | 60. Do teachers use the media center as a source of additional materials and information?<br>**Yes:** How much?<br>**No:** Why not?<br>Do you serve as a resource for teachers?<br>**Yes:** How?<br>Can books be checked out to classrooms? | | |

COMMENTS:

## Observation Form

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| S&L | 61. Rules are clearly stated for all students. They are posted or printed in a student handbook. | | |
| S&L | 62. Rules and reasons for each rule are included in the statement. | | |
| C | 63. Most rules are stated positively rather than negatively. "Students will . . ." "Students are expected to . . ." rather than "Students will not . . ." "Students may not . . ." | | |
| | **GENERAL ENVIRONMENT** (If you do not see evidence of these items, ask the appropriate person.) | | |
| C | 64. Students walk from place to place alone or in orderly groups, talking to each other without rigid straight lines or constant adult supervision. | | |
| D | 65. The schedule is flexible, including some block scheduling. | | |
| D | 66. Students have some opportunities for interaction with students in other grades at the school. | | |
| SE | 67. Interracial groups of students are seen both in and out of the classroom. | | |
| D | 68. There are designated places and times when noisy, boisterous behavior is permitted. | | |
| D | 69. An extensive intramural program includes a wide variety of activities that require a wide range of skills. | | |
| P | 70. Students serve as teacher aides, media center aides, office aides. | | |
| P | 71. Student contributions to the school and the curriculum can be seen (for example, student constructed nature trails, model villages, student-produced materials, student-led activities or classes). | | |
| SI | 72. Teachers are visible outside their classrooms. They are on the grounds and in the common areas during breaks and lunch. They are talking informally and engaging in activities with students. | | |
| S&L | 73. *All* staff are responsible for *all* students in *all* areas of the school. Teachers will deal with inappropriate behavior whenever and wherever it occurs. | | |

COMMENTS:

## Observation Form

| | GENERAL ENVIRONMENT | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|---|
| SI | 74. Teachers are involved in after-school activities. They do not rush to leave as soon as the last bell rings. | | |
| SI | 75. The guidance counselor is frequently visible in classrooms, halls, and on the grounds. | | |
| SI | 76. The principal is frequently visible throughout the school. | | |
| SI | 77. The principal knows many students by their names. | | |
| S | 78. Staff do not belittle individuals or groups of students in front of others. | | |
| SI | 79. Staff members say they like students and enjoy the age group. | | |
| C | 80. Staff and students smile, seem happy. | | |
| SI | 81. Teachers and students talk to each other about their lives outside school. | | |
| SI | 82. You feel welcome in the school. Staff and students initiate conversation with you, say hello. | | |
| D | 83. The staff are diverse in the following areas:<br>variety of interests, concerns, and skills<br>variety of personality types<br>variety of teaching styles<br>variety of age groups<br>racially mixed<br>ethnically mixed<br>balance of men and women | | |
| E | 84. The stated purpose of the school is reflected in the total program of the school. | | |

COMMENTS:

## Summarizing Sheet #1

There should be a pattern of consistent responses and observations on the following questions and items. Review your notes on the observation forms and the interviews you conducted, transferring any information you desire to this sheet. Decide if the information you gathered indicates consistency among the different people you interviewed and your observations of these areas. Your information will be added to information gained by other assessment team members through their assigned interviews and their observations.

| Need | Ideal | Question and Items | Notes on Responses and Observations | Consistent or Inconsistent? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | Staff and students do not fear for their physical or emotional safety. | Principal Q 14<br>Teacher Q 11<br>Student Q 5<br>Observation 78 | | |
| E | There is a generally accepted school philosophy. | Principal Q 12<br>Teacher Q 14<br>Student Q 14<br>Parent Q 2<br>Observation 84 | | |
| E | The principal is the instructional leader. | Principal Q 1<br>Teacher Q 7 | | |
| E | Staff are open to change and utilize their freedom to experiment with new approaches to teaching. | Principal Q 2<br>Teacher Q 3 | | |
| E | The principal defines the decision-making process, which includes opportunities for input from the staff. Staff focus on "what can we do?" rather than "nothing can be done" when problems arise and decisions have to be made. | Principal Q 4<br>Teacher Q 9 | | |
| E | Staff have positive expectations of all students. They believe all children can learn. | Curriculum Q 5<br>Q 6<br>Teacher Q 2 | | |

## Summarizing Sheet #1

| Need | Ideal | Question and Items | | Notes on Responses and Observations | Consistent or Inconsistent? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P | There is an established mechanism through which students have meaningful input into decision making. | Principal<br><br><br>Student | Q 5<br>Q 13<br><br>Q 4 | | |
| P | Parents are meaningfully involved in the life of the school and in their children's learning. | Principal<br><br><br>Parent | Q 10<br>Q 13<br><br>Q 3 | | |
| SI | Every student has a close and supportive relationship with at least one adult in the school. There is a structured mechanism for accomplishing this ideal. | Guidance Counselor<br>Student<br>Teacher | Q 2<br>Q 2<br>Q 13 | | |
| SI<br>SE | The school actively encourages improved race relations and racial understanding. | Principal<br>Curriculum<br>Guidance Counselor<br>Student<br>Observation | Q 9<br>Q 27<br><br>Q 7<br>Q 13<br>3<br>29<br>49<br>67 | | |
| SL | There is an approach to discipline that is accepted by the school as a whole. | Principal<br>Teacher<br>Student<br>Observation | Q 6<br>Q 10<br>Q 3<br>61<br>62<br>73 | | |
| C | Parents, students, and school staff like the school. They also have ideas about how to improve the school. | Principal<br>Teacher<br>Student<br>Parent<br>Observation | Q 17<br>Q 15<br>Q 15<br>Q 6<br>80 | | |

## Summarizing Sheet #2

You have gathered many pieces of information about the school. Use this chart to relate each piece of information to the needs of young adolescent students. Begin with Safety (Code S) and Effectiveness (Code E). Go through the interview and observation forms, reviewing every item that is coded "E" or "S." In Column 3, write important notes about the responses and your observations. In Column 4, write any conclusions you have reached so far about the school's responsiveness to each need. This process will help you summarize your observations and get a picture of the school as a whole. When you have completed this chart, you will have some ideas about whether or not the school is responsive to the needs of young adolescents. Again, your information and conclusions will be combined with those of other assessment team members.

| Need | Question and Item Numbers | | Notes on Responses and Observations | Conclusions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Safety (S) | Principal | Q 14<br>Q 16 | | |
| | Teacher | Q 11 | | |
| | Student | Q 5 | | |
| | Observation | 78 | | |
| Academic Effectiveness (E) | Principal | Q 1<br>Q 2<br>Q 3<br>Q 4<br>Q 12 | | |
| | Curriculum | Q 5<br>Q 6 | | |
| | Teacher | Q 2<br>Q 3<br>Q 6<br>Q 7 | Q 8<br>Q 9<br>Q 14 | |
| | Student | Q 14 | | |
| | Parent | Q 2 | | |
| | Observation | 84 | | |
| Diversity (D) | Principal | Q 7 | | |
| | Curriculum | Q 1<br>Q 2<br>Q 3<br>Q 14 | Q 15<br>Q 20<br>Q 26 | |
| | Teacher | Q 12 | | |
| | Parent | Q 5 | | |
| | Observation | 6<br>7<br>11<br>30<br>38<br>41<br>47<br>48 | 54<br>55<br>60<br>65<br>66<br>68<br>69<br>83 | |

## Summarizing Sheet #2

| Need | Question and Item Numbers | | | Notes on Responses and Observations | Conclusions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self-exploration (SE) | Curriculum | Q 11 | Q 21 | | |
| | | Q 12 | Q 24 | | |
| | | Q 19 | Q 27 | | |
| | Guidance Counselor | Q 1 | | | |
| | | Q 4 | | | |
| | | Q 5 | | | |
| | | Q 6 | | | |
| | Student | Q 7 | | | |
| | | Q 8 | | | |
| | | Q 13 | | | |
| | Observation | 3 | 43 | | |
| | | 4 | 49 | | |
| | | 8 | 58 | | |
| | | 13 | 67 | | |
| Participation (P) | Principal | Q 5 | Q 11 | | |
| | | Q 8 | Q 13 | | |
| | | Q 10 | | | |
| | Curriculum | Q 13 | Q 25 | | |
| | | Q 16 | Q 28 | | |
| | | Q 17 | Q 29 | | |
| | Student | Q 4 | | | |
| | | Q 12 | | | |
| | Parent | Q 3 | | | |
| | Observation | 2 | 45 | | |
| | | 5 | 46 | | |
| | | 12 | 50 | | |
| | | 32 | 70 | | |
| | | 33 | 71 | | |
| Social Interaction (SI) | Principal | Q 9 | | | |
| | Curriculum | Q 4 | | | |
| | Teacher | Q 13 | | | |
| | Guidance Counselor | Q 2 | | | |
| | | Q 3 | | | |
| | | Q 7 | | | |
| | Student | Q 1 | | | |
| | | Q 2 | | | |
| | Observation | 14 | 42 | | |
| | | 15 | 72 | | |
| | | 18 | 74 | | |
| | | 19 | 75 | | |
| | | 20 | 76 | | |
| | | 23 | 77 | | |
| | | 24 | 79 | | |
| | | 29 | 81 | | |
| | | 37 | 82 | | |

## Summarizing Sheet #2

| Need | Question and Item Numbers | | | Notes on Responses and Observations | Conclusions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Physical Activity (Phy) | Curriculum | Q 22 | | | |
| | | Q 23 | | | |
| | Observation | 9 | 31 | | |
| | | 10 | 52 | | |
| Competence & Achievement (C) | Principal | Q 15 | | | |
| | | Q 17 | | | |
| | Curriculum | Q 7 | Q 10 | | |
| | | Q 8 | Q 18 | | |
| | | Q 9 | | | |
| | Teacher | Q 1 | Q 5 | | |
| | | Q 4 | Q 15 | | |
| | Student | Q 6 | Q 11 | | |
| | | Q 9 | Q 15 | | |
| | | Q 10 | | | |
| | Parent | Q 1 | Q 6 | | |
| | | Q 4 | | | |
| | Observation | 1 | 44 | | |
| | | 21 | 51 | | |
| | | 22 | 53 | | |
| | | 25 | 56 | | |
| | | 26 | 57 | | |
| | | 27 | 59 | | |
| | | 28 | 63 | | |
| | | 34 | 64 | | |
| | | 35 | 80 | | |
| | | 39 | | | |
| Structure & Limits (S&L) | Principal | Q 6 | | | |
| | Teacher | Q 10 | | | |
| | Student | Q 3 | | | |
| | Observation | 16 | 61 | | |
| | | 17 | 62 | | |
| | | 36 | 73 | | |
| | | 40 | | | |

# Chapter 5
# Glossary

by Wayne Dillon and Gayle Dorman

1. **Ability Grouping**—The process of placing students in instructional groups based on criteria such as achievement test scores or teacher judgment, so as to decrease the range of ability levels present in the group.

2. **Advisor-Advisee Program**—A guidance program in which each student is assigned to an adult who then becomes a resource to the student. The purpose of the program is to help each student have a meaningful and helpful relationship with at least one adult in the school.

3. **Basic Skills**—Those skills considered to be essential to the students' growth and development, as well as to successful functioning in society. Examples of such skills include reading, arithmetic, and writing.

4. **Block Scheduling**—A procedure for organizing the school day so that a large segment of time (e.g., two hours) is allocated to instruction in one or more subjects. This type of scheduling allows flexibility in the sequence and manner in which the subjects are taught.

5. **Community Service**—See **Service Learning**.

6. **Continuous Progress**—An instructional process that allows a student to progress at his/her own pace through a sequence of skills. This is contrasted with group learning where specific skills are assigned to specific grade levels and advancement takes place only after a majority of group members have mastered the skills.

7. **Core Curriculum**—A group of subject areas that together constitute the essential content areas in the school's curriculum. These areas are typically language arts, social sciences, science, and mathematics.

8. **Departmental**—Grouping course offerings by discipline (e.g., Mathematics, English, Science, etc.) for administrative purposes. Courses in each discipline make up a department. This type of organization usually requires different teachers for the different subjects offered.

9. **Elective**—An optional course that is not required of all students. Mastery of the content is usually expected.

10. **Exploratory Classes**—Classes built around the interests of students and/or staff that are offered as a means of exposing students to areas of learning that would not normally be a part of the core curriculum. Exploration of the content, not necessarily mastery, is usually expected.

11. **Flexible Scheduling**—Offering classes and activities in a sequence that allows for variation from day to day, as opposed to a fixed schedule that is the same every day.

12. **Grade Equivalent**—A method for reporting standardized test scores that describes an individual student's performance or the average performance of a group of students in terms of grade level. If the grade equivalent score on math for the 7th grade at a particular school is 8.1, then *on the average*, students are performing at a level expected during the first month of the eighth grade. (See National Committee for Citizens in Education publications, *You Can Improve Your Child's School* and *Parents Can Understand Testing* in Bibliography, p. 69.)

13. **Houses**—Grouping students together based on some common characteristic such as age, interest, grade level, or ability level, for the purpose of giving students a smaller group within the school with which to identify.

14. **Independent Study**—A teaching process in which the student selects a topic, sets the learning goals, and works alone to accomplish the goals. A teacher advises and guides the student, who must be self-motivated.

15. **In-School Suspension**—An alternative to disciplining students by expelling them from school. The students remain in school, though isolated from other students, in a program where they continue their studies. Often, special guidance services are provided as a part of the in-school suspension program.

16. **Interdisciplinary**—A teaching process that relates the material and subject skills in one area to those in another subject area. Instruction is built around topics that use skills and concepts from more than one content area and teachers work together to coordinate teaching.

17. **Interest Classes**—See **Exploratory Classes**.

18. **Interscholastic Sports**—Athletic contests between teams from two opposing schools.

19. **Intramural Activities**—Events that feature contests among individuals or teams from the same school. The events may feature athletics, academics, games, or the arts.

20. **Junior High School**—A way of organizing the middle grades, usually grades 7-9, usually following the high

school model in terms of curriculum, schedule, activities, and teaching methods.

21. **Learning Center**—A designated space in a classroom that contains activities and materials designed to teach one concept, objective, or content area. Students may work individually or in groups to complete the activities and master the content at their individual pace.

22. **Learning Resources Center**—See **Media Center.**

23. **Magnet School**—A school with a specialized curriculum (such as an emphasis on the arts) or special programs (such as an extended day program) that is designed to attract students from a larger-than-usual geographic area, such as an entire district or community. Magnet schools have often been a part of school systems' desegregation plans.

24. **Mainstreaming**—The practice of placing students with emotional, physical, and/or mental handicaps in regular classes.

25. **Media Center**—A library containing books, magazines, films, and other print and nonprint materials that are resources to teachers, students, and administrators as they teach and learn.

26. **Middle School**—A way of organizing the grades falling between the primary grades and high school where the educational program is planned so as to respond to the developmental needs of young adolescent (ages 10 to 15) learners.

27. **Multi-Age Grouping**—Forming instructional groups to include students of several age and grade-level groups.

28. **Non-Graded**—A way of organizing the school so that there are no grade-level designations for students or courses; usually used in programs that adopt a continuous progress philosophy.

29. **Percentile Scores**—A score that compares a student's or a group of students' scores with the scores of all the students taking the test. If a student's score on a standardized test is at the 85th percentile, then that student's score is equal to or above the scores of 85% of the students taking the test. (See National Committee for Citizens in Education publications, *You Can Improve your Child's School* and *Parents Can Understand Testing* in Bibliography, p. 69.)

30. **School-Within-A-School**—Separating out a group of students within a school in order to structure a different kind of program designed to address their unique needs. For example, in a K-8 school, grades 6, 7, 8 may be a school-within-a-school.

31. **Self-Contained Classroom**—A group of students assigned to one teacher who is solely responsible for the group's instruction.

32. **Semi-Departmental** (See also **Departmental**)—A method of organizing course offerings that has some characteristics of the departmental method, but also has characteristics of one or more other organizational techniques.

33. **Service Learning**—An instructional program that expands the classroom into the community, using practical community service opportunities as learning experiences for students. Young people fulfill a real need in their community (such as volunteering at a rest home), make decisions for which they assume responsibility, work closely with adults and peers, and spend time each week relating what they are learning in the classroom to what they are learning in the community.

34. **Teaching Methods**—The techniques used by teachers to organize and present material to students in such a way that students master the material and skills. Lectures, learning centers, individual assignments, research papers, small group assignments, role plays, and field trips are examples of teaching methods.

35. **Team Teaching**—Two or more teachers cooperatively plan and teach the material to be mastered by the learners.



62

# Chapter 6
# Bibliography and Resources

## A. LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

### Schooling for Young Adolescents


Alexander, William M., et al. *The Emergent Middle School.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968.

A "classic" from the beginning of the middle school movement, this book presents the philosophy of the movement.

Alexander, William M., and Paul S. George. *The Exemplary Middle School.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981.

Two leaders of the middle school movement describe exemplary middle schools.

Blythe, Dale, and Elizabeth Lueder Karnes. *Philosophy, Policies, and Programs for Early Adolescent Education: An Annotated Bibliography.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981.

This book contains over 1500 annotated references. For more information (or to order), contact Jim Sabin at Greenwood Press, 88 Post Road West, Westport, CT 06881.

Buxton, Claude E. *Adolescents in School.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973.

Measuring the attitudes of students in grades 7 through 12 toward school, the author concludes that the "aims and procedures of the school and the needs and nature of adolescence are 'mismatched.' " He calls for a change in attitude by all who are concerned with schools.

*Cracking the Glass Slipper: PEER's Guide to Ending Sex Bias in Your Schools.* Washington, DC: NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, 1979.

This guide to reviewing schools for equal opportunity and compliance with Title IX explains the law, tells what to look at in a school, and suggests ways to work for constructive change. It can be ordered from PEER, 1029 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20005. (202) 332-7337.

Eichhorn, Donald. "The School." *Toward Adolescence: The Middle Years.* In the *Seventy-ninth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, pt. 1. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1980, pp. 56-73.

This article describes the school young adolescents need in order to learn and grow to a maximum degree.

Feeney, Stephanie. *Schools for Young Adolescents: Adapting the Early Childhood Model.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, Center for Early Adolescence, 1980.

The author, an early childhood educator, describes how her professional colleagues design learning environments appropriate to young children. She reviews the developmental characteristics of young adolescents and offers suggestions for schools suited to their physical, social, and intellectual needs. Included in the monograph is an annotated bibliography by Professors Eleanor McKinney and Marguerite Baechtold of the Young Adult Services Division, American Library Association.

First, Joan McCarty, and M. Hayes Mizell. *Everybody's Business: A Book About School Discipline.* Columbia, SC: Southeastern Public Education Program, 1980.

This book describes in detail different approaches to improving student behavior. The authors recognize that teachers should not be the only people involved in school discipline — but that students, principals, parents, and school board members need also to be involved.

James, Charity. *Beyond Customs: An Educator's Journey.* New York: Agathon Press, 1974.

The author describes some educational needs of adolescents and some corresponding developments in American education, such as open education, team teaching, and service learning. Her keen understanding of adolescents and their educational needs is enlightening and challenging.

Klausmeier, Herbert J. *Profiles of Selected Innovating Secondary Schools.* Madison, WI: Wisconsin Research and Development Center, University of Wisconsin, 1979.

This book contains descriptions of schools in Wisconsin.

Laurence, Gordon. "Do Programs Reflect What Research Says About Physical Development?" *Middle School Journal*, 6, No. 2 (1980), 12-14.

This article reviews "eight facts about physical development and what schools can do about them."

Lounsbury, John H., Jean Victoria Marani, and Mary F. Compton. *The Middle School In Profile: A Day in the Seventh Grade.* Fairborn, OH: National Middle School Association, 1980.

This book summarizes studies of 100 7th graders in 100 different schools who were observed for an entire day. Also six of these studies are presented and conclusions drawn. The authors conclude: "The typical middle school is not what it ought to be, but it is moving in the right direction."

National Institute of Education, DHEW. *Violent Schools — Safe Schools: The Safe School Study Report to the Congress.* Vol. I. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978.

This national study of school violence has statistics of special importance to junior high schools, which are more likely to have crime problems than are other schools.

Norton, John. *The South Carolina Public School Sourcebook: A Parent/Citizens Guide to Using and Improving the State Education System.* Columbia, SC: Southeastern Public Education Program, 1980.

This handbook provides a wealth of information on the ways in which the State of South Carolina impacts upon education at the local level. The purpose of the book is to "enlarge the average parent or citizen's view of the public school system." It is concise, specific, and easily readable. Although this sourcebook focuses on South Carolina only, it can be helpful to educators and parents in other states as a guide for studying the statewide education system.

Romano, Louis G., et al. *Middle School: Selected Readings on*

*an Emerging School Program*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, Inc., 1973.

This collection of papers discusses the middle school movement in general as well as specific components and techniques that are usually a part of middle school programs.

Sarason, Seymour. *The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971.

This book is a primer for both outsiders and school personnel seeking to bring about change in schools. Sarason believes that in order to change a school from either within or outside, the total culture of the school must be understood.

U.S. Department of Justice. *Human Relations: A Guide for Leadership Training in the Public Schools*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1980.

This pamphlet was prepared by the Community Relations Service to train human relations leadership connected with the desegregation of elementary schools in Syracuse, N.Y. The model may be adapted to address other concerns in the public schools. It includes an excellent checklist on racial and ethnic integration in schools.

Wenk, Ernst, and Nora Harlow, eds. *School Crime and Disruption: Prevention Models*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Education, DHEW, 1978.

This collection of articles presents several theories of causation of school crime and disruption and eight papers that describe specific programs designed to reduce school crime.

Wiles, Jon, and Joseph Bondi. *The Essential Middle School*. Columbus: Charles E. Merrill, 1981.

Wiles and Bondi review the developmental characteristics of young adolescents and describe how schools can be responsive to those characteristics. Samples of schedules, curriculum development ideas, and a variety of other materials from actual middle schools provide a wealth of practical resources.

### Effective Schools Studies

Brookover, Wilbur B., et al. "Elementary School Social Climate and School Achievement." *American Educational Research Journal*, 15 (1978), 301-318.

This statistical study of Michigan elementary schools, plus four case studies, found that mean school achievement is related to school climate as well as to socio-economic status and racial composition of the school. Much of the between-school variance in school achievement is explained by characteristics of the school social system (academic norms, expectations, and beliefs).

Brundage, Diane, ed. *The Journalism Research Fellows Report: What Makes an Effective School?* Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1980.

Journalists describe schools that work.

Edmonds, Ronald R. "Some Schools Work and More Can." *Social Policy*, 9, No. 5 (1979), 28-32.

A review of Edmonds' findings from his study of high achieving, urban elementary schools, where "the children of the poor are at least as well-prepared in basic skills as the children of the middle class."

*Harvard Graduate School of Education Association Bulletin*, 25, No. 1 (Fall 1980).

This is a special issue devoted to effective schooling.

Rutter, Michael, Barbara Maugham, Peter Mortimer, Janet Ouston, with Alan Smith. *Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979.

*Fifteen Thousand Hours* is the result of a seven-year study that followed 2700 pupils from the end of elementary school through 12 different secondary schools in south London. Rutter, a child psychiatrist at the University of London, was interested in whether schools affect such outcomes as desirable behavior, achievement on exams, and the reduction of numbers of people who wind up in jails. The results show that school climates created by adults and students in the school have significant effects that are independent of a pupil's home life and intelligence. The researchers found that school characteristics fostering pupil success included staff consensus about the school's goals and discipline; unobtrusive, firm discipline; ample use of rewards, praise and appreciation; a comfortable environment; opportunities to take responsibilities, including participation in the running of the school; academic emphasis and appropriate professional behavior of teachers.

Rutter, Michael. "School Influences on Children's Behavior and Development." *Pediatrics*, 65 (1980), 208-220.

This is a summary of the findings from *Fifteen Thousand Hours*.

Timpane, Michael. "View From America: Current Research on Effective Schools." *Harvard Graduate School of Education Association Bulletin*, 25, No. 1 (1980), 14-15.

This article presents and synthesizes the current research on effective schools. It provides a quick, concise review of the research without using research terminology.

Tursman, Cindy. *Good Schools: What Makes Them Work*. Arlington, VA: National School Public Relations Association, 1981.

This monograph reviews the research on effective schools, mentions several outstanding schools, and makes recommendations for improving schools. Although the author does not concentrate on middle grade schools, the monograph is a beginning resource on the effective schools literature.

Weber, G. *Inner City Children Can Be Taught To Read: Four Successful Schools*. Occasional papers, No. 18. Washington, DC: Council for Basic Education, 1971.

Weber studied academically effective inner city elementary schools and identified several factors that seem to be associated with school effectiveness.

### Curriculum and Instruction

Burton, Judith M. "Developing Minds — Representing Experiences: Ideas in Search of Forms." *School Arts*, 80, No. 5 (1981), 58-64.

"The aim of much adolescent art-making is not so much to create art objects *per se*, but rather to create and organize experience in a form which not only *looks* coherent but *feels* coherent," states the author. In this excellent article, she discusses early adolescent development and art programs for the age group.

Dunn, Rita, and Kenneth Dunn. *Teaching Students Through Their Individual Learning Styles: A Practical Approach*. Reston, VA: Reston Publishing Co., 1978.

Written primarily for educators, this book presents the concept of individual learning styles, an inventory for diagnosing learning styles, and many practical ideas and techniques for making classes and schools responsive to individuals' learning styles. It includes chapters with specific "how-to's" on use of physical space in the classroom, small group instructional techniques, contracting, and designing programmed

instruction materials and instructional packages. Although not focused specifically on young adolescents, the book contains valuable information on individual needs and how to be responsive to those needs.

Gregorc, Anthony F. "Learning/Teaching Styles: Potent Forces Behind Them." *Educational Leadership*, 36, No. 4 (1979), 9-11.

This is an introduction to individual learning and teaching styles.

Janeczko, Paul B. "Dancing with the Bear." *Voice of Youth Advocates*, 3, No. 4 (1980), 9-12.

This article discusses strategies to use when teaching adolescents to write poetry.

Lounsbury, John H., and Gordon E. Vars. *A Curriculum for the Middle School Years*. New York: Harper & Row, 1978.

The authors review four organizational models for middle school curriculum. They tie recommendations for curricular decisions to the developmental needs of young adolescents. The reader may not agree with every recommendation but will appreciate the clarity of presentation and the insistence upon starting decision making with the characteristics of the learner rather than with administrative concerns.

McClure, Larry, et al. *Experience-Based Learning: How to Make the Community Your Classroom*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1977.

This book is an excellent resource on how to structure learning experiences for students using the community and its resources as both the setting and the content for learning. It features specific answers to such questions as "How do you structure experience-based learning?" and "How do you link community resources with student projects?"

Purkey, William Watson. *Inviting School Success: A Self-Concept Approach to Teaching and Learning*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1978.

Purkey emphasizes the importance of positive self-concept to learning and describes the teacher's role as seeing the students in a positive manner and then inviting them to behave and achieve accordingly. He describes specific things teachers and schools do to "invite" or "disinvite" learning and positive self-concepts. The concept of an "invitational school" is presented.

### Design and Use of Physical Space

Coates, Gary. *Alternative Learning Environments*. Stroudsburg, PA: Dowden, Hutchinson and Ross, Inc., 1974.

The author argues that architectural planning and design should become a part of the curriculum itself. Contributors discuss environmental education, community participation in educational decision making and alternative forms of education.

David, Thomas, and Benjamin D. Wright, eds. *Learning Environments*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975. Also published in *School Review*, 82, No. 4 (1974).

This collection of readings critically examines ways that schools as learning environments need to be designed to respect human needs and to create opportunities for activity, exploration, and interaction. Sally Fitt writes about individual preferences for amounts of space. Mayer Spivack tells how to observe and evaluate ways in which space design can affect behavior of children with special problems. E. Proshansky and M. Wolfe identify ways that design and arrangement of space can implement specific instructional goals. Other contributors include John Holt, J.W. Getzel, Henry Sanoff and George Barbour, and Paul Gump.

Jones, Robert S., and Kenneth McEwin. "Creative Learning Environments in the Middle School." *Childhood Education*, 56 (1980), 146-150.

The authors identify physical space needs based on the various ways young adolescents learn.

Weinstein, Carol S. "The Physical Environment of the School: A Review of the Research." *Review of Educational Research*, 49 (1979), 577-610.

This is an excellent research review of the classroom environment's impact on student behavior, attitudes, and achievement. The first section examines studies of six environmental variables: seating position, classroom design, density, privacy, noise, and the presence or absence of windows. The second and third parts consider the effects of certain spatial settings.

The author concludes that we are only beginning to get a picture of the environment's role in the educational process. What evidence there is suggests that the physical environment of conventional classrooms has little impact on achievement, but does affect nonachievement behaviors and attitudes. Implications are that particular factors can influence such things as attendance, interaction with materials and people, persistence, enthusiasm, and participation. Weinstein advocates for more carefully designed research that reflects the complexity of the relationships between environment and behavior.

### Youth Participation

Pearl, Arthur, Douglas Grant, and Ernst Wenk, eds. *The Value of Youth*. Davis, CA: Responsible Action, 1978.

The editors and contributors strongly advocate a youth policy that enables young people to be participants in activities that "bring together individual needs and societal needs." The writers identify positive programs where youth are competent and important participants. Contributors include the editors as well as David Tyack, James Coleman, Edward Wynne, Elliot Wigginton and others.

Tyler, Ralph W. *From Youth to Constructive Adult Life: The Role of the Public School*. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan Publishing Co., 1978.

This collection of papers explores the importance of meaningful youth participation with adults as young people move towards adulthood. Part Three, "School Programs for Youth in Transition to Adulthood," includes articles that describe action learning and youth service programs in the public schools of Portland and Minneapolis.

## B. General Reading on Early Adolescence

Adelson, Joseph, ed. *Handbook of Adolescent Psychology*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1980.

Association for Childhood Education International. *Early Adolescents: Understanding and Nurturing Their Development*. Washington, DC: ACEI, 1978.

Blos, Peter. *The Young Adolescent*. New York: The Free Press, 1970.

*Children Today*. 8 (September/October and November/ December 1979). Special Issues: "Focus on Youth." Children's Bureau, Administration for Children, Youth and Families. Single copies may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

Cohen, Donald, and Richard Frank. "Preadolescence: A Critical Phase of Biological and Psychological Development." In Vol. 1 of *Mental Health in Children*. Ed. D.V. Siva. Westbury, NY: PJD Publications, Ltd., 1975.

Douvan, Elizabeth, and Joseph Adelson. *The Adolescent Experience*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966.

Dragastin, S.E., and G. Elder, Jr. *Adolescence in the Life Cycle*. Washington, DC: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation, John Wiley & Sons, 1975.

Elkind, David. "Egocentrism in Adolescence." *Child Development*, 38 (1967), 1025-1034.

Elkind, David. "Understanding the Young Adolescent." *Adolescence*, 8 (1978), 127-133.

Erikson, Erik. *Identity, Youth and Crisis*. New York: Norton, 1968.

Girls Clubs of America, Inc. *Today's Girls: Tomorrow's Women, A National Seminar of Girls Clubs of America*. New York: Girls Clubs of America, Inc. (205 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10016), 1978. Available at no cost.

Grinder, Robert E., ed. *Studies in Adolescence: A Book of Readings in Adolescent Development*. 2nd ed. London: Macmillan and Co., 1969.

Hill, John P. *Understanding Early Adolescence: A Framework*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, Center for Early Adolescence, 1980.

Kagan, Jerome, et al. *Twelve-to-Sixteen: Early Adolescence*. New York: Norton, 1972. (Also published in *Daedalus*, 100, No. 4 [Fall 1971]).

Kandel, Denise, and Gerald Lesser. *Youth in Two Worlds*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1972.

Kohen-Raz, Reuven. *The Child From 9 to 13: The Psychology of Preadolescence and Early Puberty*. Chicago: Adline Atherton, 1971.

Konopka, Gisela. "Coping With Stresses and Strains in Adolescence." *Children and Youth Services Review*, 1 (1979), 261-277.

Konopka, Gisela. "Requirements for Healthy Development of Adolescent Youth." *Adolescence*, 8 (1973), 291-316. Reprints may be ordered from Center for Youth Development and Research, 48 McNeal Hall, 1985 Buford Ave., University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108, or from the Center for Early Adolescence.

Lipsitz, Joan. "Adolescent Development: Myths and Realities." *Children Today*, 8, No. 5 (1979), 2-7.

Lipsitz, Joan. "The Age Group." *Toward Adolescence: The Middle School Years*. In *Seventy-ninth Yearbook of the National Center for the Study of Education*, pt. 1. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1980, pp. 7-31.

Lipsitz, Joan. *Growing Up Forgotten: A Review of Research and Programs Concerning Early Adolescence. A Report to the Ford Foundation*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Co., 1977.

Mitchell, John J. *Human Life: The Early Adolescent Years*. Toronto: Holt, Rinehart & Winston of Canada, Ltd., 1974.

Muus, Rolf E., ed. *Adolescent Behavior and Society: A Book of Readings*. New York: Random House, 1971.

National Science Foundation. *Early Adolescence: Perspectives and Recommendations to the National Science Foundation*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office (Stock number 038-000-00390-9), 1978.

Offer, Daniel, et al. *The Adolescent: A Psychological Self-Portrait*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1981.

Offer, Daniel, and Judith Baskin Offer. *From Teenage to Young Manhood: A Psychological Study*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1975.

Offer, Daniel. *The Psychological World of the Teen-ager*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1969.

Schowalter, John E., and Walter R. Anyan. *The Family Handbook of Adolescence*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979.

Searcy, Ellen, Adele Harrell, and Edith Grotberg. *Toward Interagency Coordination: An Overview of Federal Research and Development Activities Relating to Adolescence, First Annual Report*. Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Social Research Group, 1973. Available from ERIC Document Reproduction Service, Box 190, Arlington, VA 22210. ERIC No. ED 089-859.

Sommer, Barbara Baker. *Puberty and Adolescence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.

Sorenson, R. *Adolescent Sexuality in Contemporary America*. New York: World Publishing, 1973.

Steinberg, Laurence. *Understanding Families with Young Adolescents*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, Center for Early Adolescence, 1980.

Tanner, J.M. "Sequence and Tempo in the Somatic Changes in Puberty." In *The Control of the Onset of Puberty*. Ed. Melvin Grumbach, et al. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1974, pp. 448-470.

## C. Journals

ADOLESCENCE
Libra Publishers
P.O. Box 165
391 Willets Road
Roslyn Heights, NY 11577

*Adolescence* is a quarterly journal of current research for the practitioner who works with adolescents in the field of social work, psychology, or other related disciplines. Cost: $20.00/year for individuals, $25.00/year for organizations.

AMERICAN EDUCATION
Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, DC 20402

Published by the U.S. Department of Education, this journal reflects the federal interest in education at all levels. It contains reviews of successful programs, updates on federal policy, recent developments in research, and lists of new resources and publications. It is published 10 times a year with an annual subscription rate of $12.00.

AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCH JOURNAL
1230 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036

This quarterly journal presents current research in education. Cost: $14.00 for individuals, $17.00 for organizations.

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION
5801 South Ellis Avenue
Chicago, IL 60637

This quarterly journal contains general articles on education and selected book reviews. Cost: $16.00 for individuals and $24.00 for organizations.

JOURNAL OF EARLY ADOLESCENCE
HELP Books
1201 East Calle Elena
Tucson, AZ 85718

This new quarterly began publication in Spring 1981. The focus is to be primarily on research although relevant theoretical papers will also be published.

JOURNAL OF YOUTH AND ADOLESCENCE
Plenum Publishing Company
227 West 17th Street
New York, NY 10011

The Journal is a multi-disciplinary quarterly research journal. It publishes research and theoretical papers, comprehensive review articles, and clinical reports of relevance to research. Cost: $36.00/year for individuals, $84.00/year for organizations.

VOICE OF YOUTH ADVOCATES (VOYA)
Dorothy M. Broderick and Mary K. Chelton
P.O. Box 6569
University, Alabama 35486

VOYA is an independent bimonthly publication written primarily for young adult librarians. It is not, however, a sedate library journal. It provides reviews of literature written for young adults and of professional literature written for those who serve them. Although VOYA is library-oriented, the articles include conference reports, a question-and-answer column on the rights of youth, and other items of interest to professionals from other disciplines. An excellent resource for people interested in improving media center and library programs for young adolescents. Cost: $15.00/year.

## D. Organizations

ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION
AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
225 North Washington Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-549-9110

ASCD produces books and booklets, audio and video cassettes, and films for teachers, administrators, curriculum developers, principals, superintendents, and others interested in all aspects of education.

Publications include:

*Moving Toward Self-Directed Learning: Highlights of Research and of Promising Practices*, Delmo Della-Dora and Lois Jerry Blanchard, eds., 1979.

*The Middle School We Need*, 1975.

*Middle School in the Making: Readings from Educational Leadership*, Robert R. Leeper, ed., 1974.

*Profile of a Middle School*, 16 mm color film and video tape.

*Educational Leadership*, published eight times a year by ASCD. It often contains articles on the education of young adolescents and current research on adolescent development. Cost: $15/year.

CENTER FOR EARLY ADOLESCENCE
Suite 223, Carr Mill Mall
Carrboro, NC 27510
919-966-1148

The Center is dedicated to increasing the effectiveness of agencies and professionals who work with young adolescents. Through information dissemination, networking, and constituency building, the Center encourages policy setters and practitioners to expand young adolescents' opportunities for positive growth and responsible social involvement. Services include information dissemination, continuing education for professionals, and publications.

Publications include:

*Common Focus*, a newsletter of programs, research, books, films, and continuing education opportunities for professionals who work with young adolescents. Subscriptions are $8/year for five issues.

*Understanding Early Adolescence: A Framework*, 1980, by John D. Hill.

*Understanding Families with Young Adolescents*, 1980, by Laurence D. Steinberg.

*Schools for Young Adolescents: Adapting the Early Childhood Model*, 1981, by Stephanie Feeney.

*Growing Up Forgotten: A Review of Research and Programs Concerning Early Adolescence*, 1977, by Joan Lipsitz.

Bibliographies and resource lists on Parenting, Sex Education, Religion, Adolescent Development.

CENTER FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH
48 McNeal Hall
1985 Buford Avenue
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, MN 55108

Affiliated with the University of Minnesota, the Center for Youth Development and Research is known for its research on adolescent development. (Its former director, Gisela Konopka, now retired, has long been considered an expert on the topic.) Special areas under current investigation include the young delinquent female, requirements for the healthy development of youth, and the adolescent's relationship to a changing society. The Center offers seminars, workshops, and consultation for staff and administrators of organizations serving youth.

Publications:

*Quarterly Focus*, no longer published regularly; back issues 1972-1978 available for 25¢ each.

*Youthwork Bibliography*, a product of the National Youthworker Education Project 1975-1977. Topics included are: 1) understanding adolescence and youth; 2) special challenges for youthworkers; 3) process and practice in youthwork; 4) newsletters and journals; and 5) film rental sources. This is the most comprehensive bibliography for youthworkers now available; cost: $1.75. Revised edition published in 1980.

*Action Learning in Minnesota*, by Dan Conrad and Diane Hedin.

EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CENTER
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02160
617-969-7100

EDC is a private research and development organization that at any given time may have 20-30 different projects underway. EDC is a materials dissemination center for the Women's Educational Equity Act Program (WEEAP) and is also conducting a study of parent education programs.

Publications include:

*Education for Parenthood*, a newsletter, free.

*Girls at 12*, a 30-minute color film that follows three girls in their daily lives.

*Phase One Report: A Comprehensive Plan for Module Development, Field Testing, and Education*, report of the Teen-age Health Modules Project ($7.00).

INSTITUTE FOR RESPONSIVE EDUCATION
704 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
617-353-3309

IRE is an organization devoted to promoting citizen participation and citizen involvement in all phases of educational policysetting and decision making. IRE publishes bibliographies and resource materials on citizen participation and a newsletter, *Citizen Action in Education*. Cost: $5.00/year.

Publications include:

*Schools Where Parents Make a Difference*, Don Davies, ed., 1976.

*Opening the Door: Citizen Roles in Educational Collective Bargaining*, by Irving Hamer, et al., 1979.

*Resource Guide & Bibliography on School Councils*, by Jim Stanton, et al., 1978.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
1801 North Moore Street
Arlington, VA 22209

NAESP collects and disseminates information of interest to elementary and middle school principals, serves as a spokesperson for principals, conducts research and conferences, and publishes a biweekly newsletter, a monthly journal, and special publications. Annual membership dues are $75.00 and include a subscription to the monthly newsletter, *Principal*. The January 1981 issue of *Principal* is devoted to middle school education.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
1904 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091
703-860-0200

NASSP conducts research, publishes books, pamphlets, films, and filmstrips, and disseminates information for secondary school principals (junior high, middle, and senior high schools). The Association sponsors conferences and publishes material on action learning through its *Bulletin* and occasional monographs (Contact: Bill Parrish).

Publications include:

*Profiles of Significant Educational Programs*, a series of filmstrips that feature a junior high or middle school in action. Each program is narrated by the building principal and designed to stimulate further study.

*Transition to the Middle School: The Whys and Hows*, by Ted Hayes and Forest Scott, 1978. Two middle school administrators tell how the change from junior high to middle school affected their programs.

*How Good is Your School?* by William Georgiades, 1978, a report from the NASSP Model Schools Project.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR SERVICE-LEARNING
ACTION/NCSL
606 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Room 1106
Washington, DC 20525
800-424-8580, extension 88 or 89 (toll free)

NCSL is a federal agency that "assists service-learning programs by developing and distributing technical assistance materials, by sponsoring training sessions for educators working with service learning programs . . . by conducting national studies to collect data on service learning programs and to document the effectiveness of new approaches . . ."

Publications include:

*Synergist*, an excellent resource on youth participation and service learning. Published three times a year at a cost of $5.00 per year.

*Evaluating Service-Learning Programs*, 1975.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR CITIZENS
IN EDUCATION
410 Wilde Lake Village Green
Columbia, MD 21044
301-997-9300
800-NET WORK

The purpose of NCCE is to help parents and citizens gain and use information, skills, and increased influence to improve the quality of public education for our children. This overall goal is accomplished through training sessions designed to encourage partnership between parents and schools, publications useful to parents in dealing with schools and organizing for citizen involvement in schools, and a network of 350 parent groups. A national toll-free line provides information (a recorded message allows a caller to leave a name and address, and appropriate materials will be mailed). Group or individual membership: $15/ year.

Publications include:

*Network*—newspaper published eight times during the school year, includes issues of citizen involvement in education at the national level, as well as articles from local parent advocates. Publication free with membership, or $8/year without.

*Parents Can Understand Testing* (1980), by Henry S. Dyer, a concise handbook written to help parents find answers to their questions about testing. The last chapter presents questions parents might ask educators to better understand testing in their child's school. Also included is a glossary and list of selected readings.

*You Can Improve Your Child's School*, by William Rioux, answers concisely the questions parents most frequently ask.

Filmstrips, books, occasional papers, handbooks, such as *Violence in Our Schools*; *Developing Leadership for Parent/Citizen Groups*; *Parents Organizing to Improve Schools*; *The Rights of Parents*; and *Annual Education Checkup*, *Parents Rights*, and *Special Education Checkup* cards.

NATIONAL DIFFUSION NETWORK
Division of Educational Replication
Department of Education
Room B-448 Trans Point Building
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

The NDN is a nationwide system to assist school districts in obtaining materials and assistance to incorporate new and improved practices into their current programs. NDN publishes a yearly review of model programs, *Educational Programs that Work*, which may be ordered from: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. Cost: $5.50.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
1201 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
202-833-4000

NEA is a professional organization of elementary and secondary school teachers and others interested in American education. NEA publishes materials on a wide variety of topics.

Publications include:

*Teaching Styles as Related to Student Achievement*, by David Silvernail. Washington, DC: National Education Association, 1979.

*Developing Social Responsibility in the Middle School*, by Phillip A. Health and Thomas Weible.

*Reading Instruction in the Middle School*, by Maryann Manning and Gary Manning, 1979.

NATIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 968
Fairborn, OH 45234
513-878-2346

NMSA promotes the growth of the middle school concept in America and provides information on innovative programs and projects in middle schools. The Association is for teachers, administrators, supervisors, parents, college personnel, students, and other lay persons interested in the education of young adolescents. Membership: $30.00.

Publications include:

*Middle School Journal*, published quarterly. Cost $15.00 per year, or included in membership dues.

*Good Schools for Middle Grade Youngsters: Characteristics, Practices, and Recommendations*, by William Morrison.

*The Middle School: A Look Ahead*, Paul George, ed., 1977.

NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
1055 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW Suite 600
Washington, DC 20002
202-337-7666

This national association of local school boards seeks to keep its members informed of timely political, legal, and financial issues that affect educators.

Publications include:

*The American School Board Journal*, a monthly magazine that costs $32 per year. The January 1981 issue contains two articles on middle grade education: "Make Middle Schools Work for You," by Robert McCarthy, and "Choose the Right Middle School Consultant."

NATIONAL PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION
700 North Rush Street
Chicago, IL 60611
312-787-0977

The National PTA has expanded its focus beyond quality education for children to include positive home environments. Through issue identification, advocacy, and networking, the PTA works to assist parents in becoming involved in decisions that affect public education and the daily lives of their children.

Publications include:

*PTA Today*, published seven times a year with a subscription rate of $4 per year. Each issue covers in depth a topic of current concern as well as news of developments in education, health, safety, and other areas related to the welfare of children and youth.

*What's Happening in Washington*, a newsletter on national legislative/governmental concerns that affect the education, health, and welfare of children and youth. Subscription rate is $3 per year.

PHI DELTA KAPPA
Eighth Street and Union Avenue
Bloomington, IN 47401
812-339-1156

The *Kappan* is an excellent resource for up-to-date information on educational issues. Published monthly, it is available only through honorary membership in Phi Delta Kappa, but can be found in most major libraries. PDK also produces a "fastback" series of pamphlets and monographs on subjects such as "Alternative Schools in Action" and "The Middle School: Whence? What? Whither?" These pamphlets are 75¢ each, with bulk rates available.

## Middle Grades Assessment Program
## Code for Needs

S = Safety
E = Academic Effectiveness
D = Diversity
SE = Self-Exploration
P = Participation
SI = Social Interaction
Phy = Physical Activity
C = Competence and Achievement
S&L = Structure and Limits